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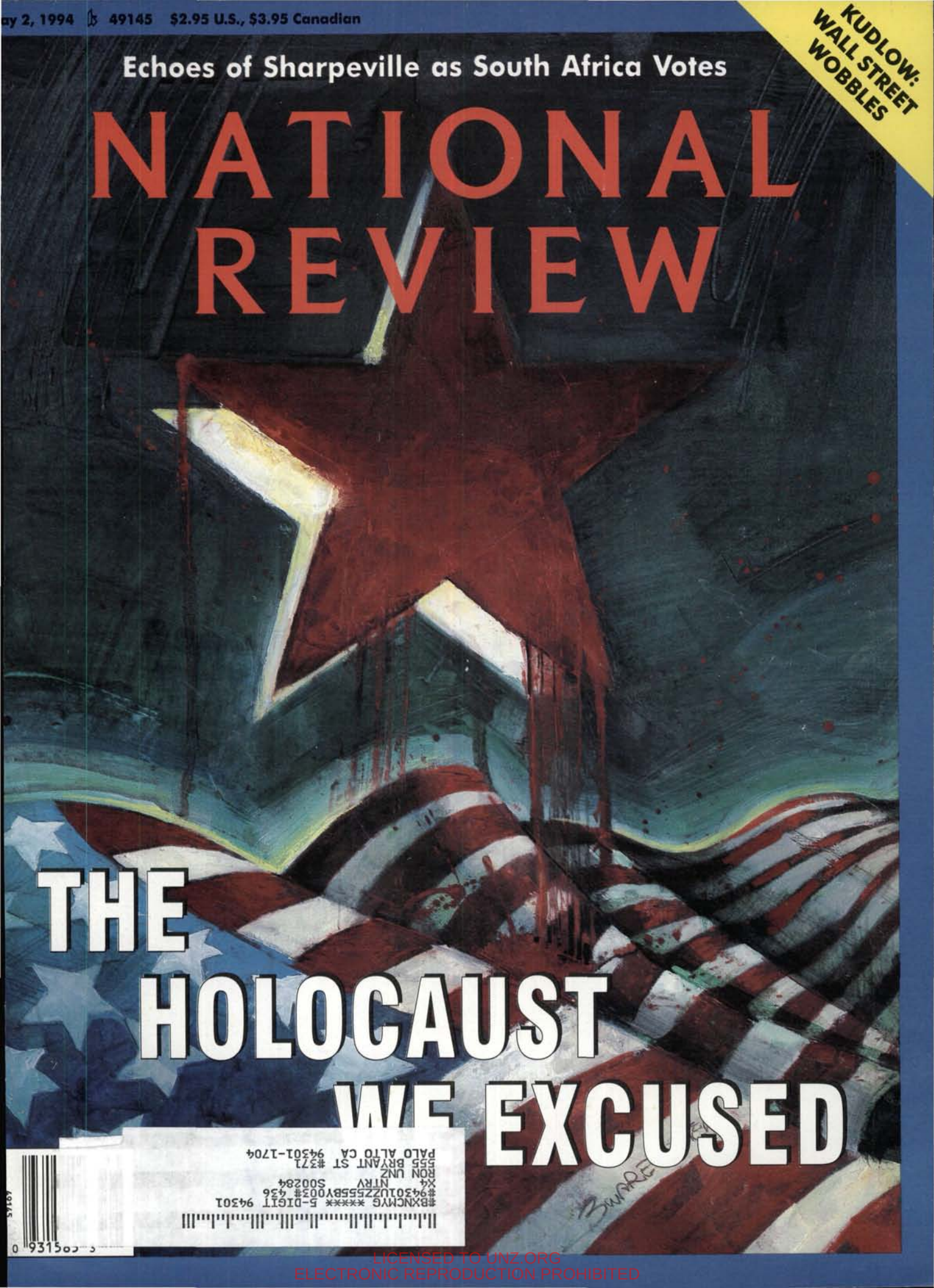

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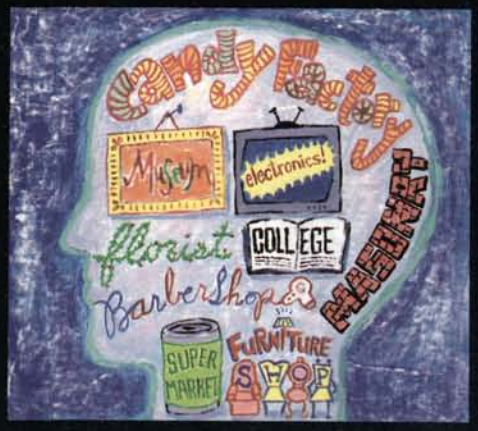

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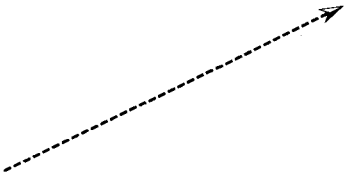

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NATIONAL REVIEW

MAY 2, 1994 VOL. XLVI, NO. 8

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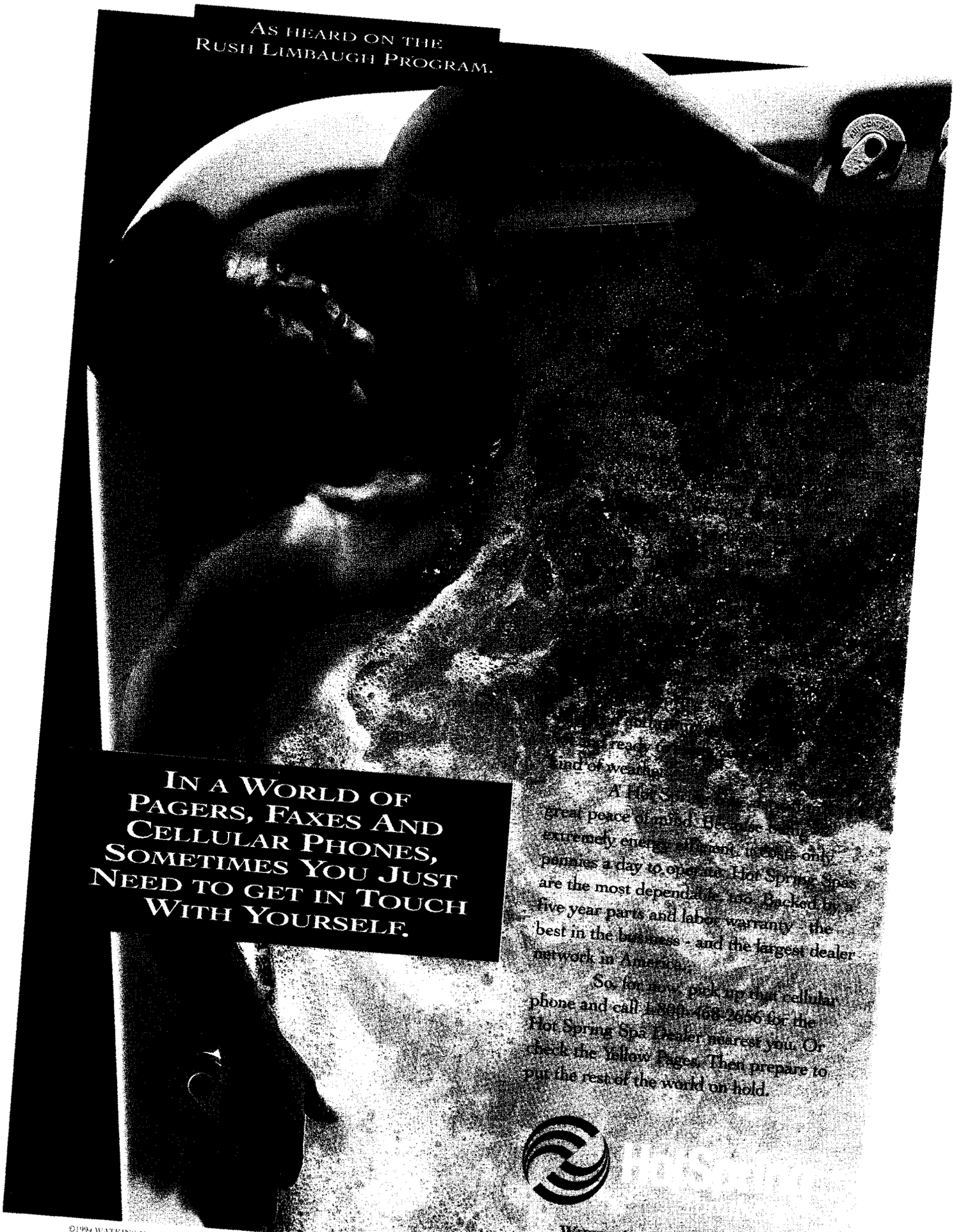

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LETTERS

Immigration: The Debate Goes On

Lawrence Auster is an expert complainer, and he's at his best when complaining about people with whom he shares some important concerns ["Avoiding the Issue," Feb. 21]. As my book *Out of the Barrio* shows, I'm not Pollyannaish about immigration and I'm certainly no advocate of unbridled multiculturalism. But I do have good reason to believe that many ethnic groups within our borders both want to assimilate and are assimilating into the cultural, economic, and social mainstream of our country. Sometimes the process takes generations—Italian-Americans, for instance, needed until 1970 to reach the same average educational level as other Americans—but it almost always occurs.

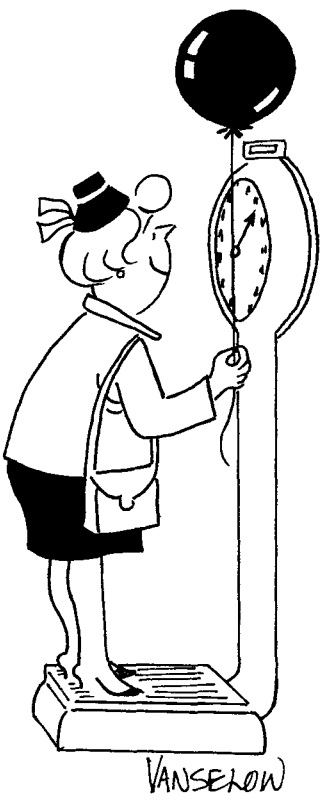
Which brings me to my complaint about Mr. Auster. Although I'm glad he cites my book's "carefully reasoned analysis" of how second- and third-generation Hispanic Americans are rapidly closing the gap between themselves and Anglos on a whole range of socioeconomic indicators, he should have kept reading. The preponderance of evidence suggests that immigrants are still an upwardly mobile group and that, by and large, they do not constitute a permanent underclass. If anything, most immigrants eschew welfare and take jobs that many native-born poor refuse to perform. For example, University of Chicago sociologist William Julius Wilson conducted a comparative study of U.S. blacks and Mexican immigrants and found that Mexican immigrants are less hostile about performing low-paying jobs, more willing to be flexible in accepting assignments outside their normal responsibilities, and more willing to work hard for the same low wages.

My optimism, however, is tempered by my mistrust of government policy. My biggest concern is that today's immigrants head into a political landscape radically altered by racial entitlements, multicultural education, and groupthink. The battle is far from over, however, and I fundamentally believe that we can assimilate many immigrants into our nation. Immigrants themselves desperately want to become Americans. How ironic that Mr. Auster lines up with the multiculturalists and tells them that they just won't fit in.

Linda Chavez
John M. Olin Fellow
The Manhattan Institute
Washington, D.C.

Lawrence Auster thinks I'm too soft on immigration, and it is his privilege to be wrong about that. But he then writes, "[Neuhaus] even dismisses the worrisome Muslim factor, claiming—on the basis of absolutely no evidence—that the U.S. Muslim population is not the reported four to seven million, but 'probably' no more than one million!" I wrote that there are probably no more than one million Muslim immigrants. The National Survey of Religious Identification conducted by City University of New York found that there are 1.5 million Muslims in the U.S., with probably 40 per cent of them being black Americans. I would welcome any more precise data to which Mr. Auster has access.

Richard John Neuhaus
President
Religion and Public Life
New York, N.Y.



Miss Chavez offers as her entire "proof" that immigrants are assimilating the fact that Mexicans seem to be more complaisant workers in low-wage jobs than blacks. Apart from her apparent willingness to continue the historic tragedy by which jobs and hopes for advancement for millions of blacks have been closed out by recent immigration, what does any of this have to do with the larger problems of Balkanization and the dispossession of American culture?

In a talk she gave in New York City in 1992, Miss Chavez said that cultural assertion and separatism by Hispanics threatens the very existence of this country as we know it; yet now, challenged on immigration, she declares herself to be an "optimist," and says that increasing ethnic divisions are due solely to government. Experience (as distinct from think-tank abstractions) indicates otherwise. The growing dominance of the Spanish language in southern Florida; the Third-Worldization of Southern California; the takeover of upper Manhattan by Dominican drug-dealers; the complete evisceration of American history and identity in many private as well as public schools; the replacement of America's historic biracial relations by multiracial conflict; these and many other disorders are occurring not because of government-sponsored multiculturalism, but because of rapid, revolutionary changes in this country's ethnic composition which it cannot absorb, and which are turning it into a very different country—which, ultimately, means a very different form of government as well.

I thank Father Neuhaus for bringing the National Survey of Religious Identification to my attention. The co-authors of the study, Barry A. Kosmin and Seymour P. Lachman, report that they themselves were "stunned" at the low numbers they derived for Muslims, as well as for several other religious groups, including Jews. According to Mr. Lachman, the higher estimates of the U.S. Muslim population that have been widely reported, ranging from three to seven million, result from reporters accepting at face value the figures put out by Muslim organizations, which naturally tend to exaggerate the size of their own group. For example, Dr. Muhammad Mehdi of the American Arab Relations Committee tells me there are at least ten million Muslims in the United States.

However, even if we provisionally accept the NSRI estimate of about one million Muslim immigrants and descendants (and Mr. Lachman admits the number may be somewhat higher), that does not let Father Neuhaus entirely off

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the hook. He offered the low figure of one million by way of reassurance; since he evidently feels that fewer, rather than more, Muslims is better, why does he support yet further Muslim immigration—when such immigration, combined with high birth rates, will soon bring the Muslim population up to those same high numbers he pooh-poohed as alarmist?
—LA

President Zhirinovsky?

From a reading of Richard W. Judy's article on Vladimir Zhirinovsky, one can readily conclude that Mr. Judy subscribes to the adage, "Forewarned is forearmed" ["From Anarchy to Zhirinovsky," March 21]. It is indisputable, as he notes, that Zhirinovsky is a racist. But is Mr. Zhirinovsky really such a threat?

Mr. Judy urges us to take Mr. Zhirinovsky seriously, even predicting that the demagogue will be the front-runner for the presidency of Russia in 1996—this, although his subject spouts sophomoric gibberish about a world parceled and divided, a Greater Russia, spheres of influence. Mr. Judy accuses the United States of capitulating to Russian "neo-imperialism" and allowing Russia to veto full NATO membership for Eastern and Central European nations.

It is doubtful that the Russian economy will have substantially improved by 1996, a fact which should work against, rather than for, Zhirinovsky. With the country mired in recession, Russian voters are unlikely to support someone so preoccupied with international affairs. Yes, matters in Russia are serious, but misplaced alarm is unwarranted. Although Russian voters may not be sophisticated, they are certainly not dumb. In time, Zhirinovsky will be exposed for the fraud that he is.

Elliott A. Cohen
New York, N.Y.

I share Mr. Cohen's doubt that the Russian economy will have improved by 1996—at least so far as the overwhelming majority of its citizens will perceive it. By my logic, that makes the probability of extremism all the higher. In any case, I hope his rosy forecast about the wisdom of Russian voters turns out to be justified. Meanwhile, we should prepare ourselves for a less sanguine outcome. —RJ

Slighting the Serbs

Noel Malcolm's article ["Furiously in All Directions," March 7] provides a vivid example of how the U.S. media have distorted the underlying causes of the conflict in Bosnia, thereby perpetuating the hateful image of the Serbs. The media are attempting to set policy by pressuring governments to condemn the Serbs, ignore the criminal actions of the Muslims and Croats, and take military action against Serbia only.

One should remember that the Serbs have good reason to fear both Croats and Muslims. It was the Croatian dictator, Tito, who created Yugoslavia's artificial borders, rejecting Serbian requests for representation. And Serbs vividly remember not only the Muslim-dominated Waffen SS divisions that exterminated thousands of Serbs during World War II, but also the five hundred years of slavery under the Ottoman Empire.

If Serbia were located a little closer to the United States—say, in Latin America—the U.S. Government's treatment of the Serbian people would be called rape. But Serbia is in the Balkans, does not sell petroleum, and does not purchase billions of dollars of sophisticated military and commercial hardware from the United States. I guess this works to their disadvantage.

Nick D. Petrovich
Vice President
Universidad de las Americas
Mexico City, Mexico

Guardian Angels

Wesley J. Smith accurately describes how the Ronald Comeau story was played out in the Vermont papers ["The Right to Die, The Power to Kill," April 4]. As a guardian *ad litem*, however, I take exception to his portrayal of Joseph Schaaf's role in the Comeau affair.

The guardian *ad litem* program was created so that children and others who are unable to represent themselves because of mental illness or other conditions may have a voice in the courtroom. The guardian is supposed to spend time with the ward, and find out what he or she wants. The guardian must then evaluate the situation and gather evidence to support the ward's wishes.

The Ronald Comeau story is tragic because Mr. Comeau wanted to end his life. Mr. Schaaf faced the difficult task of trying to understand all of the challenges facing Mr. Comeau and of giving voice to his unpopular decision. I am not defending Mr. Comeau's choice; I am defending Mr. Schaaf's obligation to make that choice known.

The Comeau case is unusual, not just for the publicity it has received, but for the unprecedented outpouring of support for Mr. Comeau. But what about the hundreds of people who need help because they have chosen to live? I am confident that the guardians *ad litem* will continue to provide them with the support they so desperately need.

W. Patrick Wilson
South Royalton, Vt.

Nothing in what I wrote disparaged guardians or guardians ad litem. *I admire people like Mr. Schaaf who are willing to serve their communities in such a capacity.*

With regard to Mr. Comeau's attempted suicide: is the writer suggesting that a person who fails in a suicide attempt be helped to finish the job? What kind of people would we become if that ethic became public policy?

In my opinion, Mr. Schaaf went wrong despite trying to do right. The fault lies in the subjective nature of the decision to starve and dehydrate his ward to death based on "quality of life" considerations.

Once the law permits anyone, whether a guardian or family member, to kill someone because of a severe disability or terminal illness, we are well on our way to becoming a death-on-demand society. The only question is how fast we will get there. —WS

Prisons, Inc.

Mr. Pete du Pont's *Conservative Manifesto* [Mar. 21] is an excellent statement of principles, but if I were forced to choose just one plank, I'd say let's build more prisons. Faced with legislators and initiative voters who refuse to fund adequate prison space, judges often compensate by handing down shorter prison terms, thereby allowing criminals to go back out onto the streets much sooner than they should. So why not let contracting companies build and run the prisons? They could have them up and running in no time, and we could avoid putting more bond initiatives on the ballots.

Robert Powell
Oakland, Calif.

Pulling Our Leg

Surely Digby Anderson is enjoying himself at the expense of his American readers; I don't believe that he has ever planned a menu or cooked a meal ["Kitchens Need McCarthy," Feb. 7]. What does he really do for a living?

Incidentally, I am curious to know what a "leg of beef" is, and how it is made into a stew. But perhaps Mr. Anderson will tell us in his next parody.

Ethel Green
Walnut Creek, Calif.

I never reply to complaints in months that contain an R. There are better things to do. —DA

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FROM THE EDITOR

Blaming the Victim

■ Concerning our cover story: Claudia Rosett's front-page story in the *Wall Street Journal*, revealing the existence of North Korean (slave) labor camps in Russia's Siberia today, had after two days produced no echoes in other newspapers or on the networks.

■ In his report from South Africa, R. W. Johnson, a man of the Left but a clear-sighted analyst, describes how the South African liberal press transformed the massacre of Zulus by gunmen of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress into a violent rampage by the Zulus—and why.

The journalists live in South Africa and have invested their hopes in the ANC. They cannot bear to think that they are about to exchange one corrupt authoritarian regime for another. So they wanted to believe that the Zulus—who have certainly been responsible for massacres—were to blame for their own massacre too.

But why did American reporters treat the massacre in the same way? Thus the *Los Angeles Times*: "a chaotic Zulu protest march resulted in violence that killed 53 people . . ."

Or CNN: "More than 50 people were killed during demonstrations by those supporting the Zulu king . . ."

Or NPR's headline: "S.A. police open fire on rampaging Zulus."

To be sure, the situation was chaotic; reporters were under deadline pressure; and they had to rely on conflicting accounts. It is unsurprising if reporters get it wrong in such cases.

What is interesting is that they all got it wrong in the same way—especially when British reporters got it much more right. Thus the *Financial Times*: "Gunmen opened fire on several thousand Zulus . . ."

Or the *Independent*: "Spear-carrying Zulus fell before ANC bullets."

Or the London *Times*: "Independent witnesses confirmed that the marchers had been fired upon by strategically positioned rooftop snipers. The attacks were clearly well planned."

Perhaps clues can be found in the *New York Times* editorial: "Accounts differ drastically as to who or what was responsible for Monday's gun battle in downtown Johannesburg . . . But . . . the larger responsibility for this tragedy lies with Mangosuthu Buthelezi [head of the Zulu party, Inkatha]." If you believe that the guilt rests with Chief Buthelezi rather than with those who had arranged "well-planned attacks" by "strategically positioned rooftop snipers" on "spear-carrying Zulus," this belief will color your reporting—especially if your colleagues believe likewise.

And they do. American reporters, like their liberal South African colleagues, have invested their hopes in the ANC. But it is only an ideological investment with a very limited liability. They are, in V. S. Naipaul's phrase, revolutionaries with a return air ticket.

■ Two issues ago I promised to find how many murderers had been released from prison only to commit a second murder. I had no luck until Paul Cassell, professor of law at the University of Utah, sent me a *Stanford Law Review* article written by him and Stephen J. Markman—a contributing editor to NATIONAL REVIEW!

They write: "Of the roughly 52,000 state prison inmates serving time for murder in 1984, an estimated 810 had previously been convicted of murder and had killed 821 persons following those convictions. Executing each of these inmates . . . would have saved 821 lives . . ."

Would not life imprisonment serve as well? No. A 1987 Justice Department study showed at least five federal prison officers killed since December 1982, in three cases by inmates serving murder sentences.

I hope my colleague will shortly tell us more. Meanwhile, we can say that 821 innocent people, including three prison officers, have died so that the guilty may live. —JOHN O'SULLIVAN

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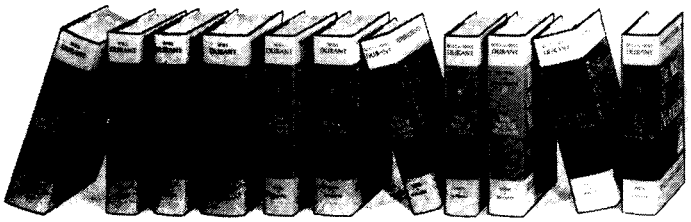

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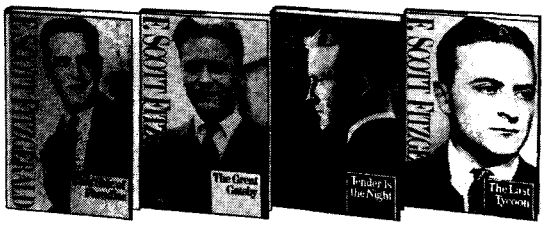

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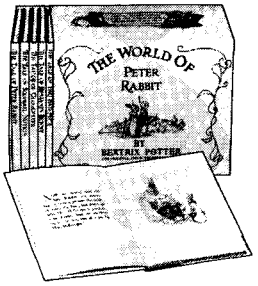

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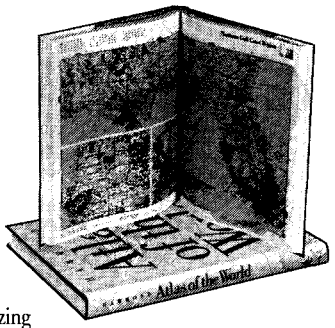

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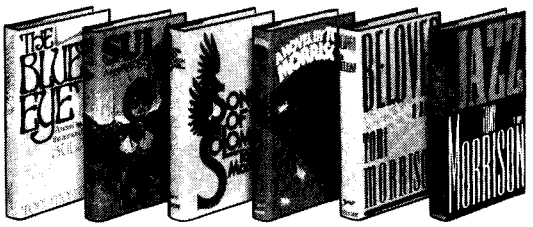

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FOR THE RECORD

■ First Couple's barnstorming of key congressional districts hit trouble early on: North Carolina telephone questioners pestered **Bill** on Whitewater and wouldn't be diverted; Chicago Cub fans booed **Hillary** at season opener. . . . Times-Mirror poll shows high levels of public satisfaction (63 per cent) with current health-care system; health-care reform is well down in national priorities—4th. . . . Two Ohio economics professors predict Clinton plan will cost one million jobs and billions in lost income by 1999. "A catastrophe," says study released by American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). . . . Clinton's end-of-tour Kansas City telethon resulted in squabble with White House press corps over rigged questions. . . . Back home, White House bunker mentality deepening. *Time* was frozen out of photo session because of unfriendly cover photo of **George Stephanopoulos**. Clinton aides blistering Treasury's **Roger Altman** for disclosures about Stephanopoulos. . . . **David Gergen**'s damage control slipping. Attempt to verify that *American Spectator* was planning new Clinton exposé by reporter **Daniel Wattenberg** rebuffed by editor **Bob Tyrrell**. Gergen also bombed when he said, "Money has never been a central factor in the Clintons' lives," just as story of Hillary's commodity killing broke. Said one Chicago commodities expert: The average investor has as much chance of similar gains "as I have of driving to Hawaii."

■ On Republican side, **William Bennett**—his *Book of Virtues* remains high on best-seller list—says he'll think over summer about conservative pressures for him to run for President. . . . *USA Today* poll shows GOP voters giving **Bob Dole** highest positive rating (20 per cent), best name recognition. . . . **James Baker**, reportedly gearing up for presidential run, will have to deal with **Lyn Nofziger** memoirs, which claim Baker helped sabotage **Reagan** revolution while acting as Reagan's chief of staff. . . . Seen in New Hampshire and Iowa in recent months: both former Defense Secretary **Dick Cheney** and Sen. **Phil Gramm**. . . . **Jack Kemp** remains in limelight, helping other GOPers in reelection campaigns. . . . Dark horse Gov. **Carroll Campbell** (S.C.) made a hit with his vehement objections to Clinton health plan at Governors Conference. . . . Hot button in Texas: GOP candidate for lieutenant governor **Tex Lezar**—an associate attorney general in Reagan Administration—is scoring by advertising on **Rush Limbaugh** show that he's running against "Clinton Democrats." . . . California conservatives heartened by entry of **Ron Unz** in primary against Gov. **Pete Wilson**. Unz has signed pollster-consultant **Arnie Steinberg**, former **Jim Buckley** strategist. . . . Polls show former Rep. **William Dannemeyer** running even with soft-on-social-issues Rep. **Michael Huffington** in California. Senate primary. Huffington, who spent over $6 million to win House seat last year, has financial edge. . . . *New York Times*' latest effort to downsize Reagan years giving art lovers a hoot. Arts-section puff piece on Hillary for hanging modern art attacked Republican "philistinism," saying Reagan White House corridors were hung with pictures of cowboys "in an America that never existed, a land where the skies are always blue and the good guys always win." For the record: Reagan pictures were anthropologically important paintings of Indian civilization by famed American artist **George Catlin**.

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"It's a plastic bag that absolutely nobody can open."

■ **Kim Il-Sung**'s North Korea did nothing to improve international relations when it said its weapons would be aimed not at South Korea but at Japan. . . . State Department has added **Sani Abacha**'s Nigeria to its list of major drug-smuggling countries. . . . Russia President **Boris Yeltsin** wins one. Prime Minister **Viktor Chernomyrdin** signed decree allowing auction of state and collective lands to private owners. . . . Bangladesh official **Helai Uddin Ahmed** says in *Far Eastern Economic Review*: "The dysfunction in these Third World bureaucracies has exceeded that of their former colonial masters."

■ 1994 Archbishop **Fulton Sheen** Lecture will be delivered by **Robert Conquest** (*The Great Terror*; *Stalin: Breaker of Nations*) on Tuesday, May 17, in Manhattan. (Previous Sheen lecturers: **Paul Johnson**, **William F. Buckley Jr.**) For info call 718-821-6382. . . . Rhode Island congressional race of Dr. **Kevin Vigilante** (brother of former *NR* articles editor **Richard**) against **Patrick Kennedy** (younger son of **Teddy**) becoming national conservative cause. For info concerning May 3 event in Washington, D.C., call **Caroline Muchado** at 202-244-1786.

■ Funnyman **Al Gore** strikes again. Asked whether wife **Tipper** is "uptight and humorless," Veep responded: "I think you're getting her confused with me." . . . **Mort Sahl** still got plaudits at Broadway opening despite politically incorrect quip that **Jesse Jackson** had replaced **Martin Luther King**'s "I have a dream" with "I have a scheme." . . . **Charles Manson** gave view of modern times when asked by ABC's **Diane Sawyer** if he's crazy: "Sure [I'm] crazy, as mad as a hatter. What difference does it make? You know, a long time ago, being crazy meant something. Nowadays, everybody's crazy."

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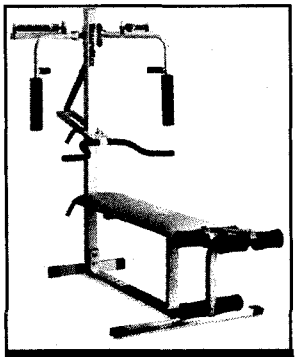

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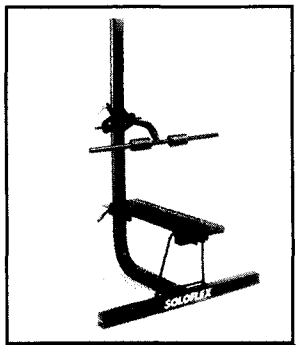

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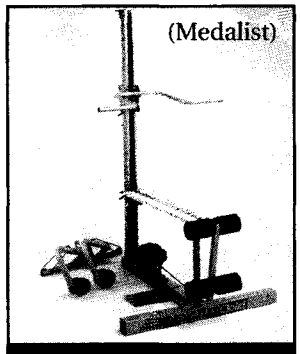

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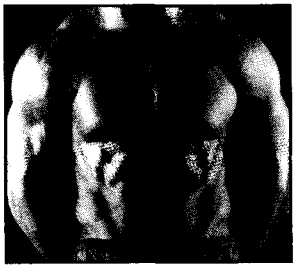

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THE WEEK

■ What's the big deal about finding ways to eliminate the federal deficit? Just give Hillary Clinton $1,000 and send her to Las Vegas.

■ *The American Spectator* has found another Arkansas state trooper who charges that Governor Clinton used the cops as procurers with badges. That makes three state troopers, plus two women (Sally Miller Perdue and Paula Jones), who have made this particular charge on the record. Gennifer Flowers said she was Mr. Clinton's lover, but didn't mention anything about state troopers—or did she? It's hard to keep track. Maybe that's why the media make such grudging efforts to do so. The *Washington Post*'s article on the new story was headlined *Decade-Old Allegation / Against Clinton Reported*. In the first place, this is a solecism: *Decade-Old Clinton Infraction Alleged* is the way the *Post* intended to downplay the story. And why "decade-old"? There was no mention of the passing decades when the alleged infringer was Bob Packwood, Clarence Thomas, or John Tower. Think of it as prudery's last stand. The press is more interested in Hillary Clinton's record of trading animals than in her husband's record of behaving like one.

■ In 1992 EPA officials complained that the Justice Department's Environmental Crimes Section (ECS) was dropping or settling cases against companies the EPA wanted drawn and quartered. House baron John Dingell (D., Mich.) jumped all over the charges, holding hearings and branding the Bush Administration soft on polluters. It made a campaign hit: "The Bush Administration," read one Clinton–Gore press release, "is letting criminals off the hook after they pollute our air and our water and our land." But even with Mr. Clinton in the White House, Representative Dingell forged ahead, getting a craven OK from Janet Reno to question career Justice attorneys about their decisions in particular cases—a stunning attack on prosecutorial discretion. Now an internal Justice investigation concludes that the head of ECS, Neil Cartusciello, made the right decision in *every* case the EPA had questioned. But never mind—Mr. Cartusciello stepped aside in April, with (according to the *Wall Street Journal*) a push from Mr. Dingell, and the acquiescence of Miss Reno. It's another indication among many—from the firing of U.S. Attorneys to the vacillation over appointing a Whitewater counsel—that supposed "stand-up guy" Janet Reno is a ready player in Washington's theater of the absurd, where bullies like John Dingell regard the law as the continuation of politics by other means.

■ "I think it's irresponsible for people not to provide for their own health care," said the President, pitching a health "reform" that makes it a crime to be responsible for your own health care.

■ Increasing taxes is not a smart move for a state governor wanting to be re-elected. That proposition is hardly news, but Princeton economics professor Anne Case has analyzed ten years of gubernatorial contests and quantified the voters' tendency to throw the rascals out. Writing in the journal of the Federal Reserve of Philadelphia, she reports that re-elected governors have on average increased state taxes $10 per person in the preceding two years, whereas defeated governors have on average increased taxes $74. A governor who increases taxes by $34 (the average for all the cases studied) reduces his chance of re-election by around 5 per cent. Professor Case finds that voters sensibly hold governors responsible for tax increases, whereas they appreciate that responsibility for poor economic performance—higher unemployment, lower per-capita income—is more dispersed. There is one exception to electoral punishment for tax-hikers: If neighboring states' governors simultaneously hiked taxes, the voters are more likely to forgive their own hiker. So perhaps we should anticipate regional conspiracies of taxing governors to "go together."

■ Memo to H. R. Perot: We trust you've noticed that Bill Clinton not only swiped your idea for national

"A cold is obscuring the sincerity in my voice."

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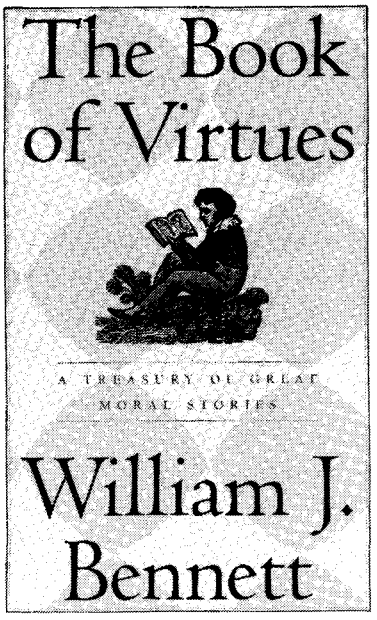

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"town meetings," he has shown the fatal flaw in the idea by rigging the meetings.

■ The financial, political, and social problems caused in California by massive illegal immigration have led to the formation of a citizens' movement, Save Our State (SOS). Headquartered in Tustin, SOS (714-541-3127) is collecting signatures to put an initiative on the November ballot that would deny illegal aliens state-funded health care, welfare, and education. To date 250,000 signatures have been collected, but 60,000 more are needed by the May 1 deadline. SOS, purely a volunteer organization, has limited resources, and, not surprisingly, is getting no help from the media. Its opponents, by contrast, are being funded by the Ford Foundation, allegedly in the amount of $4 million, and represented by a major public-relations firm. If SOS nonetheless succeeds, it will be a model for other states' citizens wanting to recapture their governments' policies from the special interests.

■ When Congress voted two years ago to renew funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, it required the CPB to implement the fairness and balance provisions of the Public Broadcasting Act. These provisions should have been in force all along, of course, but sometimes Congress has to say, *And we mean it!* The most recent issue of *COMINT*, the journal of the Center for the Study of Popular Culture, analyzes what the CPB has done since then, which is nothing. The board—still run by Bush appointees, i.e., nominal Republicans—refused to pass judgment on individual programs, and confined itself to soliciting the opinions of the public in PR-controlled dog-and-pony shows. The reason for this inaction is clear: half the people in public broadcasting think they're engaged in public enlightenment at public expense, and the other half don't want to rock the boat. Time for Congress to beach it permanently.

■ Some believe Justice Harry Blackmun chose to retire now in order to ensure that Bill Clinton would be the one picking his successor. Good timing. A few months from now it could be up to Al Gore.

■ Japan's governing coalition has been struggling to find a successor to outgoing premier Morihiro Hosokawa, brought down by a financial scandal, and chances grow that another election will have to be called soon. All this was predictable, since the seven parties in the coalition were united only by common dislike of the Liberal Democratic Party, which had dominated Japanese politics since the war. The government is a hodge-podge of socialists, goo-goos, and renegade ex-LPD-ers, whose views are widely divergent on any subject other than electoral reform. As for Hosokawa, we wish him well. He had many Clintonesque qualities—young, attractive, the governor of a small southern prefecture, dogged by stories of sexual as well as financial peccadilloes. We assume his fate is a divine omen.

■ It may come as no surprise that some foreign governments confiscate U.S. property abroad without compensation. More surprising, though, is the fact that many of these same governments receive millions of dollars a year in U.S. foreign aid. In Nicaragua alone, the Chamorro government has left 1,350 U.S. property claims unresolved while accepting over $867 million in aid since it came to power in 1990; over that period we have also forgiven over $284 million of its debt. Credit goes to Republicans on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for issuing a report bringing this and similar abuses to light, and for seeking amendments to the Foreign Relations Authorization Act that would provide for settlements of expropriation claims. But will the State Department go along?

■ We have our own favorite to fill the vacancy on the U.S. Supreme Court, but unfortunately a Singapore judge is not eligible.

■ An HIV-positive "performance artist" called Ron Athey started a panic in a Minneapolis art "space" when he cut a bloody tattoo into the flesh of a friend, cleaned the wound with towels, and ran the towels out on a wire above the heads of a hundred onlookers. One viewer fainted, while others made for the door. The act, which also featured Mr. Athey being pierced through the scalp with long needles, was supposed to raise one's consciousness about AIDS, or something. If you fear that this artist may have been forced to dig into his own wallet for the cost of razors, needles, and towels, don't worry. Mr. Athey is supported by the Walker Art Center, the artistic taste of whose directors has attracted the notice of the Federal Government—in the form of a cool million in three years of grants from the National Endowment for the Arts. NEA chairman Jane Alexan-

The Pits

On *60 Minutes*, Lesley Stahl
Had the unmitigated gall
To take five grand and make a bid
The way the Mrs. says she did,
The trouble being, in a day
She nearly blew her wad away
As, in Chicago, brokers' looks
Spoke volumes on the Mrs.'s books.

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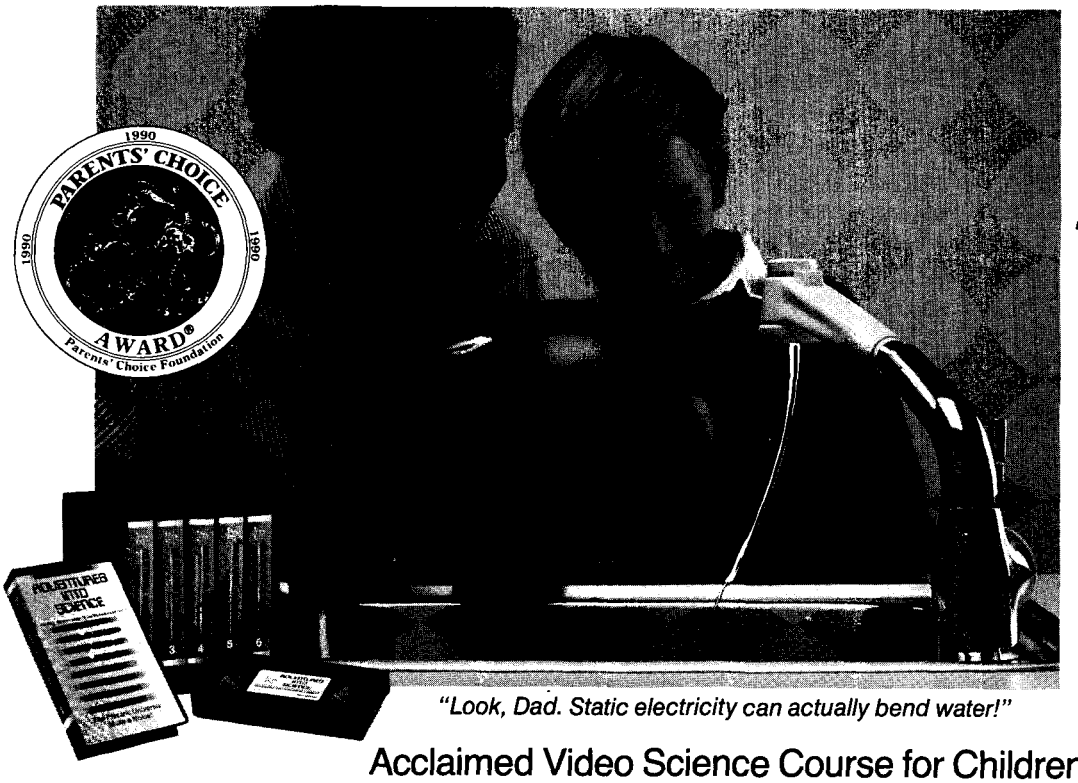
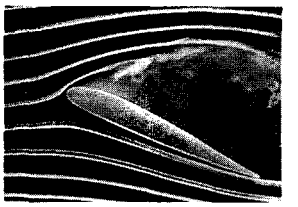
Video Science Course for Children

Winner of the Association for the Advancement of Science Award

"Only 8 Years Old...And *He's* Teaching *Me* About Science!"

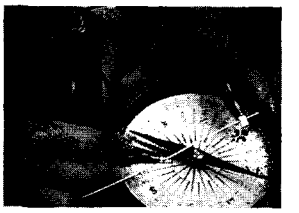


"Look, Dad. Static electricity can actually bend water!"



Learn what makes an airplane fly.

Learn how machines work.



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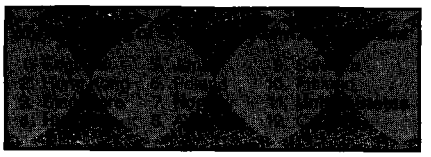
A Head Start in Science for Children Ages 7-12.

It's no secret: American schools are failing science. The National Science Foundation and the U.S. Dept. of Education have reported this time and again. The *average* European or Japanese student gets *3 times* more science instruction than the best U.S. science student!



*Source — National Science Foundation (Performance in physical sciences, 4th-12th grades.)

In tomorrow's super-tech world, science will be essential for success. U.S. kids are already being left behind. But now there's something you can do about it.

Turn Your TV into a Teacher.

For the first time ever, your child can start learning science from the same learn-at-home video program proven in Europe.

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491-245

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der explained that "Not all art is for everybody." It is, however, *paid for* by everybody.

■ The New Age, a mishmash of superstition and self-help, has come even to crass New York. So says *New York* magazine. A financial officer for a nonprofit organization is studying to become a witch: "Wicca allows you to ask a bountiful universe for the things you want." An ad-agency exec says that if he were moving his office, "Yes, I'd consult a psychic. Certain places just have good karma." Marla Maples Trump owns a rose quartz: "It is supposed to exude warmth and love." What does her husband think of it all? "When I have my girlfriends over" to talk about New Age subjects, Mrs. Trump reports, "Donald always ends up hanging around us"—though, given the fate of the first Mrs. Trump, this may show a rather more Old Age interest.

Something in the Water?

NOT FOR the first time, we wonder what they are drinking down at the Environmental Protection Agency. For America's water systems—the safest in the world—are being forced by federal edicts to spend billions of dollars to "chase phantoms," in the words of Jeffrey Wennberg, mayor of Rutland, Vermont (pop. 20,000), and chairman of the environment committee of the National League of Cities. Mr. Wennberg told NATIONAL REVIEW that all around the country water systems are saying they cannot comply with federal mandates.

In New England, at least, anger at the Feds is reaching the level of civil disobedience. Almost half of Vermont's water systems have declared they will refuse to pay new levies mandated by the EPA for administration of the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. In small Milton, Vermont, the alderman in charge of town water, Jim Fitzgerald, has pledged to go to jail rather than pay the $800 levy, which the locals say is destined to fund their own harassment by outside officials. What is going on?

In many small communities the water system is run by volunteers. For instance, in Websterville, Vermont (pop. 420), the water service was looked after by the school custodian and bus driver, Jack Mitchell, and his sidekick, Gary Brouillette. In July 1990 three EPA officials arrived unannounced at Mr. Mitchell's house, asking if he had any problems with the required federal water-quality tests. Naïvely thinking the officials were there to help, he told them, yes, he did have trouble with the scores of tests and stacks of forms required each month. For example, Mr. Mitchell confided, because of the constancy of turbidity results, he only did the actual testing several times a month, filling in the intervening daily results required by the federal forms by guesswork. Mr. Brouillette confirmed his account.

Three months later the Feds hit the two Websterville men with 34 felony counts of filing false reports. By mid 1991 the case had reached the U.S. District Court, where Judge Franklin Billings ruled the EPA evidence inadmissible. The two men were acquitted on 33 counts and fined $1 on the other. The judge pronounced the EPA officials' behavior "shocking" in that they had procured evidence "through trickery and deception," violating the defendants' Fifth Amendment rights.

John Lukin, program manager of the Northeast Rural Water Association, says if he were an EPA official visiting the back country of New England right now, "I'd get myself a bullet-proof vest." And Mayor Wennberg predicts the discontent will shortly get worse, when smaller systems are hit with thick new packs of federal forms full of "techno-babble."

As a local official whose family, neighbors, and constituents all drink the water for which his administration is responsible, Mr. Wennberg not unnaturally takes offense at the suggestion implicit in federal regulation that he cannot be trusted. Where he and his staff suspect possible contamination, they go "way beyond" federal requirements, using coliform testing and heavy-metal scans. But three-quarters of the tests now being done in Rutland to conform to EPA requirements—some $8,000 to $10,000 worth annually—are "completely unnecessary" because they are tests for contamination by pesticides and herbicides not used in Vermont in decades.

Rutland is currently building a $6-million slow-sand filtration system for its water, but Mayor Wennberg is worried that the feds will soon insist that this be replaced by a granular activated carbon facility, which would entail another $5 million or so in capital expenditure and hundreds of thousands of dollars in operating costs. Indeed, existing federal law threatens cities with endless mandates to install new systems based on "best available" technology regardless of health needs or costs.

"I cannot as a local official show any real health

Kristol on Health Care

Tinker at the edges;
  Snip it here and there.
Be a topiary
  Artist as you pare.
Put away the meat axe.
  Cancel the IV.
Do not grant a pass to
  Bill or Hillary.

W. H. VON DREELE

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benefits from the best available technology," says Mayor Wennberg, "yet they want me to go out there and get local support for a big new bond issue to finance it. Their test of your performance as a water operator is how much you are spending, not how well you are protecting public health. People here are getting very angry and saying enough is enough. There is quite a Boston Tea Party atmosphere."

Responding to this anger, bills have been introduced in Congress to bring the regulators under control. S-1920, co-sponsored by David Boren (D., Okla.) and Pete Domenici (R., N.M.), and H-3392, co-sponsored by Jim Slattery (D., Kan.) and Tom Bliley (R., Va.), introduce the revolutionary idea that federally mandated testing of drinking water be limited to contaminants suspected of occurring in a particular water system, and that standards for treatment systems be based on health-risk assessment, rather than purist notions of "zero contamination."

Such common sense, needless to say, is being

RIGHT DATA

Robin Hood Goes to College

WITH the demand for educated workers rising, and the growth in their numbers slowing, the economic advantage of a BA has never been greater. The average college graduate now earns 57 per cent more than someone without a degree, up from 38 per cent in 1979.

Tuition, meanwhile, has exploded—rising three times faster than the CPI since 1980. For many middle- and upper-income families, college saving goes on for years before a child's enrollment. Unfortunately, these thrifty, thoughtful families may only be hurting themselves.

The problem stems from the so-called "Institutional Methodology" (IM), a complex set of rules used by most American colleges to determine scholarship amounts. The IM's key calculation, the "expected parental contribution," is based on a family's "discretionary income" and the value of the assets it is deemed to have "available." An extra dollar of income or wealth (including the value of the family's home) means less aid.

VALUE OF $1.00 INVESTED FOR EIGHT YEARS

Year	Before Tax	After Income Tax	After Income Tax and Education Levy
1	$1.030	$1.022	$0.925
2	1.061	1.044	0.856
3	1.093	1.067	0.791
4	1.126	1.097	0.732
5	1.159	1.115	0.677
6	1.194	1.139	0.626
7	1.230	1.164	0.579
8	1.267	1.190	0.536

Source: Martin Feldstein; calculations by author.

The "tax rate" schedule implicit in the IM is quite steep. Under current scholarship rules, a family of four earning as little as $25,000 a year loses 22 cents in school aid for each additional dollar of income or assets. The scholarship tax rate peaks at 47 per cent at the still modest $47,000 gross-income level.

In a world of no taxes, a dollar invested at 3 per cent interest would grow to $1.126 after four years, and $1.267 after eight. If a 28 per cent income tax is imposed, the net amounts decline to $1.097 and $1.190, respectively.

Families with college students, however, are effectively taxed on interest as well as the assets that generate interest. During the first year of college they end up *losing* 7.5 cents for every dollar of accumulated assets. At the end of four years the scholarship tax has shrunk that dollar to 73 cents. A family with two children who attend college in succession will see an initial dollar of assets shrivel to 54 cents.

The most obvious effect of the college tax, notes Harvard economist Martin Feldstein, is to encourage families who would qualify for financial assistance on the basis of income not to accumulate any assets before their children start college. To the extent that scholarship aid and student loans fail to cover tuition, the family is better off borrowing funds than saving in advance.

Most families are probably not aware of the rules governing scholarships. For those that are, the effect on savings is dramatic. Mr. Feldstein's research, based on 1986 data, considers the impact on a household with a 45-year-old family head, two college students, and an income of $40,000 per year. The scholarship rules induce the family to save only $23,000, or half what they would have saved without the adverse incentives.

Under current rules, families with incomes above $120,000 are ineligible for financial aid. For them, educational expenses are like every other cost. For the overwhelming majority of American families, however, the progressive tax code imposed by U.S. colleges is more burdensome even than the one imposed by the IRS.

—ED RUBENSTEIN

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fiercely resisted by the environmentalist lobbies. EPA administrator Carol Browner is trying to broker a compromise between the two. That, however, may end up leaving the present wasteful and irrational federal mandates in place—and the citizens of small New England towns an increasing threat to venturesome Feds.

Blackmun's Last Laugh

AT THE press conference at which he announced his retirement, Justice Harry Blackmun observed how he and Justice John Paul Stevens shared a belly laugh "in a coffee break somewhere" about how the two, appointed by Republican Presidents, are now considered the Court's liberals. While the Justices are entitled to a moment of mirth over this development, the joke has been at the expense of the American people.

The media may applaud Justice Blackmun's odyssey from "conservative nonentity to liberal champion." But the American majorities that elected Republican Presidents to office, with certain expectations about the course of government, have cause to rue his self-realization.

To be sure, no President can anticipate the controversies that will confront his judicial appointees in years ahead, and much has been made of the "disappointed President" phenomenon. Accountable government, however, requires some sense that those elected and appointed to high public positions will bring certain broad philosophical premises to their tasks. When this sense is violated, "we the people" normally can redress matters through the mechanisms of democratic government. In the case of Supreme Court Justices, this is not so.

Harry Blackmun may well have been a "humble" man in his personal life, as we are told by the gaggle of former law clerks now being quoted by all the best journals. In his public life, however, he was arrogant and disrespectful of the Constitution. Not only in the area of abortion—where he concocted the "right of privacy" out of whole cloth in an opinion that reads like a caricature of judicial activism—but less famously in the areas of gay rights, racial quotas, church–state relations, federalism, and criminal justice, he treated his own private moral convictions as the law of the land. Well before the end, Harry Blackmun had become a traditional liberal, distinguishable from William Brennan (with whom he could also have had a few laughs) only by his mediocrity and lack of legal distinction.

Just as Democratic mud-throwing in the Senate denied the country Robert Bork, the country had been bequeathed Harry Blackmun twenty years earlier by libels directed against the far more worthy Clement Haynsworth. It is fitting that Justice Blackmun should pay the Republican Party back for not choosing him first by straining to delay his departure until someone like Bill Clinton could take office. We are confident that this President will choose a worthy successor.

Keep the Kettle Boiling

The American Spectator, bless it,
With testosterone stored to address it,
  Is preparing more dirt
  For a bimbo alert
As subscribers prepare to access it.

W. H. VON DREELE

Friends to the End

THE Clinton Administration has argued that its diplomacy with North Korea is a success, on the ground that it has "frozen" North Korea's nuclear-weapons development program. The argument rests on the technical fact that Pyongyang's principal known reactor, at Yongbyon, would need to be shut down in order for weapons-grade plutonium to be extracted, and, as long as the diplomatic minuet continues, North Korea has been discouraged from doing so. Thus (it has been argued), we have had Kim Il-Sung over a barrel ever since we caught him attempting to evade International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors. Even though he might already have obtained enough plutonium for one or conceivably two weapons, which is unfortunate, we have stymied any further advance.

This argument was always counterintuitive. It presumed, without any direct knowledge of what was going on in North Korea, that Kim Il-Sung couldn't be doing anything significant we didn't know about—as if he had sent all his nuclear technicians home on furlough for the duration. Unlikely. He was already moving ahead on "weaponization" (that is, developing what plutonium he had into a usable weapon), and moving ahead even more rapidly on long-range missiles to deliver it.

Now, revelations from the IAEA team's aborted inspections in March have knocked the Administration's argument into a cocked hat. While the team was barred from seeing all it wanted (which was ominous enough), it was able to observe some surprising new facilities under construction, including a parallel reprocessing line that could double North Korea's plutonium production capacity in six months. In addition, the team saw evidence of a

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giant 50-megawatt reactor under construction (presumably to replace the merely 5-MW reactor that has had the world community so in a tizzy).

It is a depressing picture, and enough to prove that the Administration's perpetual evasions are a grave mistake. The passage of time is our enemy. Unless we start thinking seriously about coercive options, we have no policy. It is time to bring the question of economic blockade to a head at the UN, letting the Chinese know that if they stand in the way, their Most Favored Nation status is dead. It is time also to reinforce our troops in South Korea. Defense Secretary William Perry has commented cryptically—but usefully—on NBC's *Meet the Press* that military options can't be excluded.

Finally, congressional Republicans must get behind the bill introduced by Representative Benjamin Gilman last November (H.J. Res. 292) that would support the President's use of "any means necessary and appropriate" to prevent the North Koreans from achieving a nuclear-weapons capability. This would strengthen the President's hand enormously for the crisis that may now be unavoidable.

Drifting toward Haiti

PRESIDENT Clinton is not far from being backed into a corner on Haiti from which only a military operation can rescue him.

The President campaigned against Mr. Bush's policy, calling it immoral to return Haitian immigrants to their poor, violent, and authoritarian country. Restoration of Haiti's deposed President Aristide was Mr. Clinton's solution to the refugee problem, since it would permit him to send them back to a poor, violent, but *democratic* country. But the Haitian military refused to yield. Then Mr. Clinton and Mr. Gore met and negotiated with Aristide, and—like their predecessors—found him impossible, unreliable, and arguably unbalanced.

Our Haiti policy has been frozen in failure for months. Now, Haiti is becoming the center of attention for the Congressional Black Caucus, the lobbying group Transafrica, and wider leftist circles. Within days it will, no doubt, be taken up by the usual clutch of Hollywood stars, starved for causes. This is the coalition that, with help from various old-line civil-rights and liberal organizations, attacked Reagan Administration policy on South Africa, and its political clout is not derisory. Its goal is to end the exclusion and return of Haitian immigrants, and Randall Robinson, head of Transafrica, has started a hunger strike to that end.

How will Mr. Clinton react? By reimposing a strict policy, while Randall Robinson's body weakens and his anti-Clinton rhetoric strengthens? By accepting all the Haitian immigrants, in the tens or hundreds of thousands, no matter the reaction in Florida—with its 25 members of the House and one senator up this year, and 27 electoral votes in 1996? Or by restoring Aristide—by force if need be?

Of course, the Administration could distance itself from Aristide now and broker a political deal in Port au Prince without him; but it has shown little taste for taking on difficult and politically unrewarding tasks today just to ward off trouble tomorrow.

We should not shirk from policing the Caribbean, but an intervention under current circumstances would tie our efforts entirely to Aristide. Stability in Haiti requires building up a center. That is what the U.S. should be working toward, instead of getting into a corner where Marines must be sent down to play bodyguard to Aristide and solve Mr. Clinton's domestic political problem.

Libel and Indifference

ON PBS last week a meandering documentary, *America and the Holocaust: Deceit and Indifference*, advanced the offensive notion that America was an "accomplice" to the murder of Jews by Nazi Germany. By refusing to bring out refugees from Nazi-dominated lands and then refusing to bomb Auschwitz—says this line of revisionist thinking, articulated in a 1984 book by David Wyman—America, and President Roosevelt in particular, acquiesced in genocide.

Before embracing Mr. Wyman as his historical guru, writer-director Martin Ostrow should have read the work of the pre-eminent scholar of the Holocaust, the late Lucy Dawidowicz, and especially her devastating review of Mr. Wyman's book. In March 1943, a committee of desperate American Jews proposed that FDR appeal to Hitler to release some of the surviving Jews of Europe. But Mrs. Dawidowicz reminded us that "Hitler never abandoned his goal of destroying the European Jews, not even until his dying day. . . . Wyman still does not know that."

As for the scenario in which American bombers might have made runs over Auschwitz and the rail lines leading to it, she pointed out that rail lines can be rebuilt overnight, while the mission would have required diverting air power from other efforts more directly aimed at winning the war—such as D-Day. "How can one reconcile Wyman's charge," wrote Mrs. Davidowicz, "with the plain evidence . . . that the United States had mobilized all its industrial, military, and, yes, human resources to defeat and destroy National Socialist Germany?" One can't.

Meanwhile, as Paul Hollander points out in our cover story, there was a genocide in which many distinguished Americans, almost all on the Left, *did* ac-

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quiesce, some excusing it explicitly as the price of social progress, some denying the plain evidence of it, some simply ignoring it. That was the mass murder in the Soviet Union—which continues to be ignored. The discovery in recent years of mass graves, some containing as many as 200,000 corpses, has aroused almost no interest in the American media or, outside specialist circles, in academe. The news itself was not reported at all on some networks, and it has stimulated few powerful reflections on the op-ed pages.

In the media's appetite for the most far-fetched allegations of American involvement in Nazi genocide, and in its steadfast lack of interest in Communism's war against humanity, one can sense a repressed awareness of the moral complicity of the American Left, including "anti-anti-communist liberals," in great historic crimes. But one day liberalism will have to confront this aspect of its past.

NOTES & ASIDES

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

With regard to your correspondence with Eric Al-

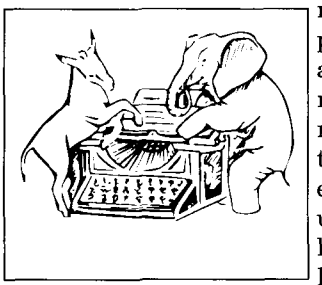
POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

■ **New York:** The truism that politicians lack intellectual rigor does not apply to Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan. As George Will has said, Moynihan has written more books than most senators have read. And they're good books, no less. He's the neoconservatives' Democrat—the man who helped form the debate about family breakdown and welfare.

But although he delivers endless intellectual sermons on the Senate floor, Moynihan does not always vote as he preaches. Conservatives have not gotten legislative help from Moynihan on cutting taxes, rolling back government, instituting school choice, reducing the number of abortions, even diminishing the welfare state. Now Big Man on Campus—chairman of the Finance Committee—Moynihan has his fingerprints all over Clinton's tax plan. He must be held accountable.

However, no prominent New Yorker has jumped into the race against him. Larry Kudlow, a former deputy in Reagan's OMB, became *NR*'s economics editor and ruled out a bid. The remaining qualified conservatives—Evan Galbraith, George Pataki, Herb London, Pat Barrett—are all fighting to dethrone Mario Cuomo.

To get a viable candidate (i.e., one who can win *and* govern), conservatives must block any attempt by the party to choose someone like Pierre Rinfret, the bumbling banker who ran as the Republican candidate against a weak Cuomo in 1990 and barely beat Herb London, running on the Conservative line. If a noteworthy senatorial candidate does not emerge, it's likely that Al D'Amato will use his influence as de-facto state chairman to anoint Moynihan's challenger as a way of helping sort out the gubernatorial field. This may or may not have good results. But in the unlikely event that one of the above candidates were to pull out of the gubernatorial race now and draw the battle lines before Moynihan's primary with Al Sharpton leaves the senator looking like a right-winger, that person would be in a good position to mount an effective challenge. Any of those candidates would be in a position to preach a gospel of fiscal austerity, welfare cuts, and reduction in the size of government—*and* to practice what he preached if elected to the Senate.



■ **Maryland:** Paul Sarbanes is one of the most liberal members of the Senate (ACU: 0). With his re-election bid approaching, he decided to hold a town meeting earlier this year. Bad idea: boos and catcalls cut it short. A Mason–Dixon poll confirmed that only 34 per cent of Marylanders want him re-elected. A poor showing for a man who in his three races has not wound up with less than 60 per cent of the vote.

The two main contenders for the Republican nomination are bolstered by Sarbanes's weakness, Clinton's unpopularity, and the bad policies of both. For the first time in several election cycles, a Republican has a reasonable shot at winning a Senate seat from Maryland. But what kind of Republican?

Ruthann Aron is a lawyer and Montgomery County Planning Commissioner. She campaigns with a strong anti-tax, small-government, and pro-growth message. Her conservatism ends there, however. She talks of the urgency to reform health care, offers only lip service to school choice, and is pro-choice on abortion.

Bill Brock talks of "working hard to achieve health-care reform," which suggests a willingness to meet Democrats halfway on bad legislation. He too is pro-choice. On the other hand, he speaks in fiscally conservative terms and is relatively sound on school choice. He has respectable senatorial experience: representing Tennessee from 1971 to 1977 with an ACU rating of 82. Following that, he was RNC chairman in the years leading up to Reagan's election, and as Labor Secretary for the Gipper he was not loved by the unions.

Bill Brock is no conservative either (when asked if he would take a no-tax pledge, an aide responded: "Oh no, he's much too pragmatic for that!"). He is, however, sympathetic to conservative causes and could be dragged into supporting good ideas now and again. If Bill Brock were successful he would be the first person ever popularly elected to the Senate from two states. Even better, if he were successful, Paul Sarbanes would be out of the U.S. Senate.

—Geoffrey Morris

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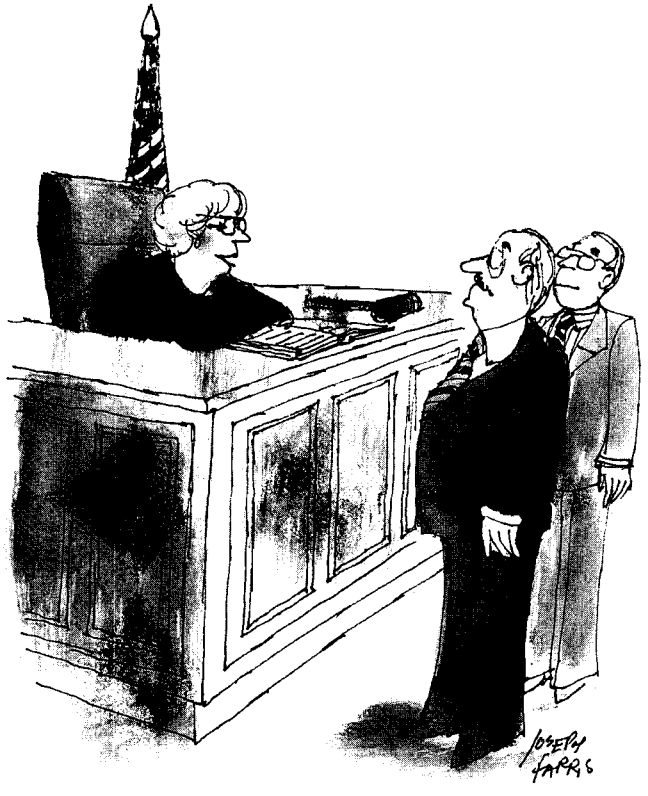

"I sentence you to 100 hours of watching Barney."

terman, which you shared with *NR*'s readers, I cannot resist contributing the maxim which you ought to have applied. However, first the background.

You may have followed the remarkable exploit of Bruno Peyron in circumnavigating the earth in less than eighty days aboard his splendid catamaran. And, as you may know, he had an almost impossibly short time in which to ready the vessel and the crew for the departure. His explanation of how he was able to do so much so quickly is invaluable: *Il ne faut pas se laisser piéger par les cons.*

I thought this such a good rule to apply as one goes through life that I asked a friend, an Oxford-schooled classicist, to translate the earthy sense of the maxim into Latin.

Thus: *Non oportet inlici ab istis mentulis.*

You will find that it's just right for the Eric Altermans of the world, with whom I too used to correspond but will no longer, applying my new-found maxim!

Yours sincerely,
Claude Roessiger
Mirror Lake, N.H.

Dear Mr. Roessiger: But sometimes it's fun. How old are you? Cordially, WFB

■ Dear WFB:

My subscription to NATIONAL REVIEW was given to me by a friend as a Christmas gift about six years ago. It was by far the best gift I have ever received. I was thrilled to find many of my deep-seated beliefs articulated so perfectly. I will forever be indebted to my magnanimous friend.

Consequently, I developed my own gift-giving tradition. Every Christmas I choose one friend to give the gift of NATIONAL REVIEW. I attach one stipulation to the gift, however. If the gift-receiver finds *NR* to be worth while (and they always do) then they must also give the magazine as a gift to a friend they believe it will benefit. I felt this would be my contribution to spreading the good word.

Well, this past Christmas I chose my old college roommate, a broker for Merrill Lynch. He called me to thank me and say how much he appreciated the magazine. He also told me his father, who is a respected surgeon, picked up his *NR* off the coffee table, read it, and fell in love with it. My friend explained to his father how he received the subscription and the condition attached to it.

Every Christmas my friend's father sends out a standard gift to approximately fifty other doctors and medical professionals. He immediately decided that next year he would be sending out something really worth while—fifty NATIONAL REVIEW subscriptions. Merry Christmas!

Sincerely,
Connell F. Friel
Pearl River, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Friel: That is the nicest, warmest gift we ever got, commemorating Christmas. My best to your former roommate, and especially to his father. I wonder. Do you suppose we could get the Clinton Plan to include *NR* for Christmas? I mean: for every man, woman, and child, otherwise he should veto the bill. Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

I recently informed a co-worker of your special *Firing Line* debate "Resolved: Political Correctness Is a Menace and a Bore." He responded by stating that the title was an oxymoron. How could something be both a menace and a bore? Furthermore, he said, if the topic was a bore, wouldn't that make *Firing Line* boring?

I responded to his first point by stating that I think something can be both menacing and boring. I cited the Democratic Party as a prime example. However, I couldn't think of a reply to his second point. Any suggestions?

Cordially,
Kenneth J. Robinson
Dallas, Tex.

Dear Mr. Robinson: No. To prove that something is boring can be very exciting. Doing this, by the way, was one of H. L. Mencken's specialties. Cordially,
—WFB

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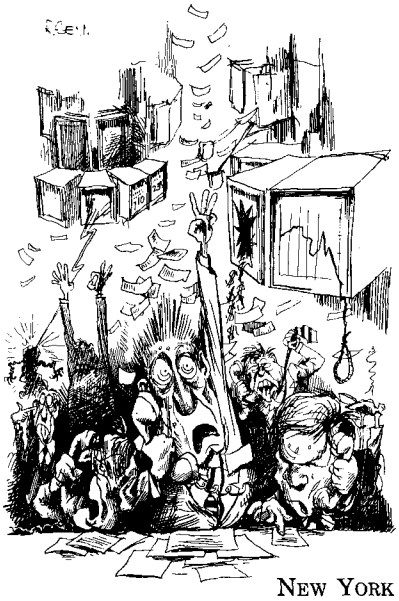
ON THE SCENE

On the Supply Side

LAWRENCE KUDLOW



Roman Genn

NEW YORK

SUDDENLY it all changed. What was supposed to happen in early 1994—a continuation of the powerful bull market—didn't happen. Instead came a vicious bear charge, where famous hedge-fund managers lost hundreds of millions of dollars in currencies, government bonds, mortgage-backed securities, and stocks, while small investors bailed out of mutual funds. Consensus optimism turned negative overnight.

Perhaps the most immediate cause of the wobbly stock market is the collapse of bonds. A year ago the Clinton Administration, led by former Wall Streeter Robert Rubin, hailed the decline in bond yields as proof that world credit markets heartily approved of their record tax increase. They have suffered considerable embarrassment from the fixed-income rout (Treasury yields since last October have skyrocketed from 5¾ per cent to 7¼ per cent, a price loss of 17 per cent). Not only is the policy being discredited, but the analytical link between (lower 1994) deficits and (higher 1994) interest rates has again broken down.

Interest rates, especially longer-term rates, are primarily a function of future inflation expectations, not deficits. Rising inflation is always the bane of financial assets such as stocks and bonds, since investors worry that future repayment of interest and principal will be made with devalued dollars. Fearing this, investors reshuffle portfolios into commodity assets such as gold, real estate, raw materials, or durable goods that better protect their value against higher inflation. Since last autumn, inflation-sensitive price indicators such as gold and broad commodity indexes have increased by roughly 12 to 15 per cent, while yearly price changes in durable goods have jumped too—used cars by 7 per cent and existing homes by nearly 5 per cent.

Meanwhile, for all the talk of Fed tightening, the Fed continues to pump high-powered reserve money into the banking system. Over the past three months, adjusted Federal Reserve credit has grown at a 16 per cent annual rate. As a result, the market is losing confidence in the Federal Reserve and its stated policy goal of long-term price stability. The demand for cash balances, illustrated by changes in the narrow M1 aggregate, has grown by only 5.4 per cent over the past three months. Whenever the Fed supplies more cash balances than the market demands, the gold price rises and financial prices decline as investors move to hedge against inflation. This of course played out in the recent sell-off in stocks and bonds.

Since the surprise meeting a month ago between President Clinton and Fed Chairman Greenspan, senior Fed advisors have been telling people in private that the Board has no stomach for additional tightening in the near term, since any additional market turbulence will be publicly blamed on it. Unfortunately, the collapse of the bond market already indicates a loss of confidence in the Fed's strategy of gradualism. What's more, the expected appointment to the Federal Reserve Board of Alan Blinder, a confirmed liberal Keynesian unimpressed with the inflation threat, will further undermine market confidence and may well doom Chairman Greenspan's intention of pre-empting future inflation.

Outside the policy corridors of Washington, many Main Street shopkeepers wouldn't mind a whiff of inflation. After all, they have not been able to raise prices for nearly six years. And retirees might not mind higher interest rates on their saving deposits. It may well be that the political constituency for zero inflation is at a low ebb. That is why this is a dangerous period. The Fed must provide independent leadership right now. Otherwise inflation will really take hold, and once this process begins, it is very difficult to throttle back.

On another front, the financial markets are fighting higher taxes as well as easy money. It is no coincidence that the first major downward correction in market prices in three years occurred during the run-up to the April 15 tax-payment date, as people began to concentrate the collective mind on the largest income-tax increase in post–World War II peacetime history. The 1993 tax bill raised the top marginal tax rate from 31 per cent to 40 per cent, thereby reducing the after-tax return on the extra dollar earned from 69 cents to 60 cents. Additionally, three new entitlement proposals—for expanded Medicare, welfare reform, and job training—all of which will require still higher taxes, were announced in March.

What does this mean for investors? The after-tax yield on a 7.25 per cent government bond slips from 5 per cent to 4.35 per cent, while the after-tax return on the current 2.9 per cent earnings yield on the S&P 500 stock index drops from 2 per cent to 1.74 per cent. For six- and seven-figure investments, this represents sizable after-tax losses even if prices were unchanged. Prices, however, do not remain constant, as

Mr. Kudlow is NR*'s economics editor.*

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investors demand higher pre-tax yields and thus lower prices to compensate for the tax penalty.

Furthermore, while income-tax rates were raised in 1990 and 1993, Congress failed to index the capital-gains tax to offset the effects of rising inflation. Investors must therefore continue to pay taxes on the inflation element of any capital gain, as well as the real portion, and so any increase in inflation will sharply raise the effective tax rate on real capital and wealth.

At 3 per cent inflation, for example, assuming a normal 3 per cent real rate of return, the effective tax rate on real capital gains stands at 56 per cent. Inflation at 4 per cent, however, raises the effective capgains tax penalty to 65 per cent, even while the statutory rate holds at 28 per cent. Historically, over the past forty years, whenever the effective capgains tax rises above 60 per cent, a lengthy bear market in stocks ensues.

This is why rising gold prices, probably the best barometer of inflation expectations, have an inverse relationship with stock and bond prices. From 1989 though 1993, the decline in inflation from 5 per cent to 3 per cent dropped the effective capgains burden from 75 per cent to 56 per cent, stimulating a tremendous stock- and bond-market surge of wealth creation which has been the only real source of stimulus to the economy. Now, however, as the short-run effects of easy money and abnormally low interest rates wear off, the rise in income-tax rates and inflation will seriously reduce incentives for work, production, and investment.

This decline in future production growth makes the existing stock of money more inflationary, since the same volume of money will be chasing fewer goods. Before 1994 ends, the demand-side boomlet launched by the Fed's easy-money policies will be overmatched by the tax-heavy economy's inability to produce sufficient raw material, capital, and durable good supplies. That is why sensitive market prices are rising. Over the next year or two, bond traders may be surprised to rediscover that tax hikes lead to both higher inflation and slower growth, as in the 1970s.

Finally, no stock-market story can be cast in purely domestic terms. Hudson Institute economist Alan Reynolds has properly pointed out that the Clinton Administration's Super 301 saber-rattling with Japan, and the implications for a currency war, are a key part of the market fallout. Not only do new trade barriers impoverish domestic consumers and businesses, a shaky dollar also repels foreign investors, who do not relish the prospect of large currency losses. The October 1987 stock-market crash was preceded by just such a trade and currency conflict, conducted by then Treasury Secretary James Baker against Japan and Germany. Back in 1929, it was the early legislative progress of the Smoot–Hawley protectionist trade bill, later signed by President Hoover, that signaled the end of the 1920s boom and opened the way for the Dark Ages of U.S. economic history.

Also looming is the growing possibility of a confrontation with North Korea over the issue of nuclear weapons. In order to isolate Kim Il-Sung, the U.S. will need the full support of its old Pacific ally, Japan, as well as its new ally, China. Yet the Clinton Administration has clumsily mistreated both nations. Hence the potential for Pacific conflict has been raised on many fronts.

At the end of the day, one must wonder whether it is the U.S. that is becoming isolated. Rather than free-market entrepreneurship and wealth creation, the Clinton Administration is pursuing higher taxes, open-ended entitlement spending, re-regulation, trade protectionism, easy money, a cheap dollar, and tunnel-vision diplomacy. No wonder the stock market is wobbly. And while down markets are always interrupted by short-term rallies, the bear is likely to growl for a good long while. □

Haunting Russia

RADEK SIKORSKI

"THIS IS where they buried my father's ashes, I think," said Irina Orlova, pointing to a granite obelisk erected over a mound. We were in the grounds of the Moscow crematorium, where the NKVD burned the bodies of thousands of victims. She was not sure whether her father, a professor of languages at a military academy liquidated in the 1939 Purge, lay under the obelisk, because there were at least two other burial grounds nearby. Mrs. Orlova, now a retired publisher of school textbooks, was lucky: on her father's arrest she and her mother were merely expelled from their spacious apartment to a hovel, rather than sent to a labor camp as was customary with the families of enemies of the people. They even received some compensation when the professor was rehabilitated in the 1950s. But it was only in 1991, when the archives were thrown open after the Soviet Union's collapse, that Mrs. Orlova finally learned where her father was buried. For years, the authorities maintained that the growing mounds of ashes in the crematorium yard belonged to those who did not have families to bury them.

Mrs. Orlova now devotes her spare time to Memorial, the volunteer organization that takes care of the holy sites of the Soviet holocaust. In the crematorium office, she showed me several tomes, with the details of hundreds of victims in each. Many entries were accompanied by photographs: thoughtful intelligentsia types, disheveled peasants, rigid Army officers, from every nationality of the Soviet empire—Russians, Jews, Balts, Poles, Ukrainians, Caucasians—each a haunting face, frozen in time while looking at his executioners. I would have thought the burial ground would be a good place for official foreign delegations to honor the memory of the victims of Communism, but Mrs. Orlova had not heard of a single such visit. "I suppose the authorities do not encourage it," she sighed.

In fact, when President Clinton, last autumn, wanted to visit the mass grave where 200,000 Purge victims were buried in Byelorussia, the former Communists who now run the country tried to talk him out of it. Clinton went regardless, but surreptitiously, outside the official schedule, like a thief in the falling dusk. And the

Mr. Sikorski, NR's roving correspondent, wrote about the Afghanistan war in his book The Dust of the Saints.

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world's press hardly noticed. Let us imagine the fuss that would rightly be made if such an incident happened in, say, Dachau.

Perhaps the only exception to the general indifference toward Communism's killing fields is the burial grounds of Katyn, where the flower of the Polish officer corps—over 15,000 men—were shot and buried by Soviet commissars in 1940. The crime was particularly heinous: the men were prisoners of war, and they were shot one by one, in the back of the head. The crime was discovered in 1941, after the German invasion of Russia. For many years, the Soviet government insisted, against all evidence, that the Germans had committed the murders, even arguing that the massacre be included in the Nuremberg trials as a Nazi atrocity. They kept up the lie for 45 years—with the support of the West.

Katyn, unlike the other mass graves in Russia, is now the destination of official Polish pilgrimages. After Yeltsin released documents proving the Soviet guilt, Russian prosecutors helped the Polish authorities to locate the burial sites and identify the victims. From the point of view of foreign delegations Katyn is also well placed. The Soviet Union's Auschwitz, Kolyma, where three million are estimated to have been worked to death, is many hours' flight from Moscow; Katyn is only about 120 miles away, closer than from Warsaw to Auschwitz.

Katyn also demonstrates how far Russia still has to go before she is a normal country. Two of the men who carried out the Politburo's decision were still alive when Yeltsin admitted to Russia's responsibility. One, Pyotr Sopranienko, had been head of the NKVD's POW department and personally signed the shooting orders. The other, Vasili Tokariev, was the commandant of the NKVD in Tver, and supervised the shootings. Both had made it to the rank of KGB general, drew special pensions, and lived in *nomenklatura* apartments. Despite the Polish authorities' urgent appeals, none of their privileges were taken away after the announcement and both died recently of natural causes. Evil went unpunished, and the Russians were deprived of a badly needed history lesson, the equivalent of Eichmann's trial in Jerusalem in the 1960s.

Apart from Mrs. Orlova, few Russians I have talked to have a proper appreciation of their country's past. The young seem even more ignorant than the old. Elena, a pretty blonde in her late twenties, was typical. Her English was perfect and she was off to Amsterdam the following week, to an internship with an advertising agency. We spoke above the din at Manhattan Express, a nightclub just off Red Square.

"Why do you not like Russia?" she asked, surprised, in response to some mild criticism.

"Because you do not feel responsible for your past," I answered.

"But we were the biggest victims ourselves. Stalin was a Georgian."

"Hitler was an Austrian."

"But Stalin killed millions of innocent Russians."

"Millions of innocent Germans died because of Hitler."

"But it was all the fault of the Communists. Before 1917 Russia never invaded any country." Her large eyes shone with blissful innocence.

"What about the conquest of Central Asia or the three partitions and a century's occupation of Poland?" I asked, but she was uncomprehending. This was clearly not what they had taught her in the history curriculum.

"What about now, do you think Ukraine should be independent?" I persevered.

"Ukraine is Russia; they are Russians. I can understand their language and they can understand mine. They are members of the family. You remain a member of the family even if you quarrel, even if you deny it."

If Westernized Elena, who professed horror of Vladimir Zhirinovsky, thinks thus, then what must brew in the breast of most ordinary Russians?

The country is bewildered and sulky but not apologetic or humbled. Every day, fresh flowers lie on the granite steps of the Lenin mausoleum. Outside Moscow and St. Petersburg, Lenin statues remain in town squares and millions of people pray for an end to the Yeltsin experiment. Moscow reminded me of 1920s Berlin as portrayed in *Cabaret*. The nightclubs are still full, but thugs with shaven heads lurk, preparing to pounce.

No one can de-Communize Russia the way Germany was de-Nazified—unlike the case in Central Europe alternative elites simply do not exist there. What Western leaders can and should do, however, is to start imposing on the Russians a version of their own history roughly commensurate with the facts. The reason we do not, on the whole, fear the Germans is that most Germans have learned the lessons of their recent past. The Russians, on the other hand, are dangerously out of touch.

The first step could be for Western politicians visiting Moscow to insist on honoring the graves of the Communist holocaust's buried victims. Only when the dead are honored and the living repent will the past be truly buried as well. □

Rebel with a Cause

JOHN R. COYNE JR.

CHICAGO

AS A 27-year-old former seminarian who serves in his South Side parish church as usher and lector, William J. Kelly seems miscast as an insurgent leader. But the usually soft-spoken Kelly, whose Dennis Day good looks and manner would gladden the heart of any Irish mother (his is Swedish), is a certified rebel—and a rebel with a cause.

That cause is the restoration of traditional rights and values to the American middle class. To that end, Kelly is running as the Republican candidate for the Illinois 1st District congressional seat now held by Bobby Rush, former defense minister for the Black Panthers, whose charge in those golden days was primarily to procure weapons to be used against the "pigs."

But today, in Clintonian America, the Panthers have digested the pigs, and radical chic has become the establishment ethos, with expressions of belief in middle-class morality increasingly viewed not only exotic and extreme, but at times even as criminal.

Mr. Coyne, formerly a speechwriter for Vice President Agnew, works for a large Chicago corporation.

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It all crystallized for Kelly last July at the Sheraton Chicago, where Bill Clinton spoke to a conference of businessmen and labor leaders. Clinton, at that time still soaring above the swamp of venalities that is now swallowing his Administration, was hammering away at gridlock.

Suddenly, he was interrupted by a voice from the rear of the room. It was Bill Kelly. "How can you claim gridlock when the House and Senate are controlled by members of your own party?" asked Kelly. "You promised a middle-class tax cut. Now you are proposing the largest tax increase in American history. What you need to do is abide by your original campaign promise of a middle-class tax cut."

Kelly was quickly escorted out, with the President lecturing his back—and the cameras: "This is not your meeting, sir. Most people have better manners than to interrupt somebody giving a speech. I might say that's another thing wrong with this country. There's not enough civility in how we treat one another."

Three hours later, federal agents surrounded Kelly's family home, put him in handcuffs, and took him to the Metropolitan Correction Center (or the Black Hole of Chicago, as some call it), where he was interrogated and stripsearched, and, as he tells it, "spent the next 27 hours moving from [a] solitary cell to the federal lock-up with drug dealers and bank robbers in handcuffs and leg irons."

Kelly was then taken to court, charged under a catchall title of the U.S. Code with being in the same area of a building as the President of the United States, and released under a general agreement requiring that he not get arrested again for a similar crime—which means, apparently, avoiding all places where Presidents may be visiting.

Interestingly enough, four months later, during a speech at Georgetown Medical Center in Washington, President Clinton was again interrupted, this time by an AIDS activist identifying himself as "Luke Sissyfag." Shrieked Sissyfag: "Talk is cheap, and we need action. You're hiding behind the [AIDS] quilts. You are doing nothing."

No lockup for Sissyfag, however. "It's all right, it's all right," said the now tolerant President. "Part of my job is to be a lightning rod. . . . To lift the hopes and aspirations of the American people, even though there's no way I can now keep everybody alive who already has AIDS."

Thus, in Clinton's America, the Sissyfags get the lightning rod, the Kellys get the slammer.

And the Panther gets the office. After recovering from what he admits was a bad case of both fright and shame, Kelly looked for help. Where? Call your congressman, he was told. But who was his congressman? Bobby Rush, who since the happy Panther days has been involved in a series of brushes with the law, including the invasion of the Chicago Art Institute, where he seized an unflattering portrait of the late Mayor Harold Washington and then asked for $100,000 in

Roberto Parada

taxpayer money to pay for his defense in the subsequent civil suit. (As alderman, Rush refused to make child-support payments to his estranged wife, who was forced to go on welfare.) Hardly the rock for a troubled son of the traditional middle class to lean on.

The very idea that he had been put in prison devastated Kelly. Then, he says, it hit him. "What did I have to be ashamed about? When he was my age, Bill Clinton was doing his protesting in Moscow." And, Kelly might have added, at a time when our soldiers were dying in the war he was protesting. (In fact, some have called it treason.)

"And when Congressman Bobby Rush was my age," Kelly continues, "he was advocating the overthrow of the U.S. Government."

Kelly sums it up this way: "I got charged with a federal crime because I had the audacity to remind Bill Clinton about his campaign promise. Yet it's legal to burn an American flag. That's why if you want to be a rebel today, you have to stand up and talk about traditional American and religious values."

And that is what Kelly has set out to do, running against Rush in a recently redrawn district that is home to about half of Chicago's South Side black community and includes the predominantly Irish neighborhoods of Morgan Park and Beverly, where the South Side Irish St. Patrick's Day Parade is held.

It was on the morning of the 16th annual South Side Irish Parade that Kelly held his first rally at a club near the parade route. The rally included Irish dancing, bagpipes, food, and a visit by Ed Vrdolyak, who is unofficially giving Kelly the benefit of his considerable political expertise.

Kelly gave no formal talk, mingling instead with supporters, delivering his basic campaign message conversationally—"We need people in Congress to protect the rights of the middle class. . . . We need to end wasteful government social spending. . . . We need more tax incentives for small business." For a somewhat jaundiced veteran of the great Agnevian New American Majority campaign, there's nothing unusual here. Except, that is, for the fervor with which the message was delivered and the large number of young people who were there to receive it.

It is to these young people that Kelly is speaking. They are very conservative, he points out, but for the most part they have discovered the reality of values on their own. They surely didn't get any help from the tenured professors who are dedicated to undercutting middle-class ideals.

And where were the conservative leaders when this takeover was being consolidated?

Kelly believes, as do his supporters, that it's risky business today trusting any conservative over thirty. They believe in the early Ronald Reagan, but they also believe that although he was a visible symbol of patriotism he was unable to finish his mission. And to a man, they feel that George Bush and his people left them stranded, totally at the mercy of a generation of tenured radicals.

(Continues on page 68)

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RANDOM WALK

■ Throughout America's years of greed and envy, demand-siders complained incessantly of the large infusion of foreign capital into the United States. The Japanese were allegedly plotting to buy up all of America's prized assets—everything from IBM (would that they had) to the Seattle Mariners baseball team to prime beach-front real estate.

To be sure, Reaganomics proved to be a magnet for foreign capital. According to data compiled by the Bank Credit Analyst in Quebec, Canada, net long-term foreign investment in the United States peaked in 1988 at roughly $100 billion.

In fact, during the span of the Reagan years, foreigners invested one-half trillion dollars more in United States industry, stocks, and start-up companies than Americans invested abroad. That giant sucking sound you heard was America swallowing up investment capital from the rest of the world—a phenomenon driven in large part by comparatively low marginal tax rates and the strong dollar.

Along comes Clintonomics and, Poof! the "crisis" vanishes. In 1993 our $100-billion-a-year long-term capital-investment surplus became a $40-billion deficit. Now, international capital is flowing out of the United States, rather than into it. Preliminary first-quarter 1994 data compiled by analyst Lindi Ross of BCA indicate that the capital flight is accelerating. Meanwhile, foreign investment in places like China has nearly doubled since 1992. Investors are pulling out of the U.S. for places where free-market policies are implemented.

Even before last month's 200-point decline, U.S. equity markets have been underperforming relative to other nations. Bert Dohmen reports in this month's *Wellington Letter* that in 1993 the U.S. stock market ranked 32nd out of 33 countries. The U.S. S&P 500 was up 7 per cent in 1993. Compare this with France and the UK, up 17 per cent; Italy, up 20 per cent; Canada, up 24 per cent; Germany, up 31 per cent; Mexico, up 46 per cent; and the Pacific Rim nations—including Malaysia, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Thailand, and the Philippines—which nearly doubled their market value.

So supply-siders had it wrong when they predicted that Clinton's tax and regulatory policies would have a negative impact on financial markets. The truth is that Clintonomics did produce a bull market last year; it's just that it happened everywhere except in the United States.

■ Years ago supply-sider Jude Wanniski noted that investors searching for the next hot spot of international unrest need only get their hands on the travel schedule of the IMF. This powerful international banking agency continues to promote economic austerity policies such as currency devaluation and higher tax burdens as the condition for new loans to emerging countries. These root-canal policies tend to generate inflation and recession, which in turn generate social unrest and political upheaval.

"I'm putting money in the bank, but your college education depends a lot on Alan Greenspan."

The latest example of IMF mischief has surfaced in Turkey, where Prime Minister Tansu Ciller recently unveiled her version of IMF big-bang austerity. The Ciller plan includes a 28 per cent devaluation of the Turkish lira (following a 12 per cent devaluation last January). It will freeze wages, and will raise prices as much as 100 per cent on goods such as gasoline, tobacco, and sugar. Also, the plan raises taxes, including a 2 per cent tax hike on banks and corporations. On the brighter side, the plan hopes to close unprofitable state-owned enterprises.

Now let's try to get this straight. Mrs. Ciller will decimate the value of Turkish money, so it will no longer pay to work and save; then she will price basic necessities out of reach of most of the populace, and then raise taxes on private banks, which will stop lending, and corporations, which will become unprofitable and lay off workers, on top of a 40,000 planned layoff of government workers.

Officials at the IMF and the World Bank noted on deep background that these policies would help the government stay its course even if this were to lead to social unrest in politically sensitive regions! But I have seen it all before. And I know how to short Turkish shares.

■ Bear Stearns's bond strategist David Goldman reports that financial markets are now expecting major Fed tightening actions over the rest of 1994. Using the Libor futures market, Goldman estimates that the expected three-month interest rate at year end will reach 5.62 per cent. This is a big change from mid March, when the market expected about 5 per cent. The current three-month deposit rate in the Libor market is 4 per cent.

So under Greenspanian gradualism, international credit markets are forecasting 6 additional Fed tightening moves, presumably 25 basis points each, until the Fed Funds rate and the discount rate reach 5.5 per cent.

Will the Fed do it? I very much approve of price stability and would like to see it, but I'm hedging my bets. Markets, after all, change their minds, especially when politicians change theirs.

—GEKKO

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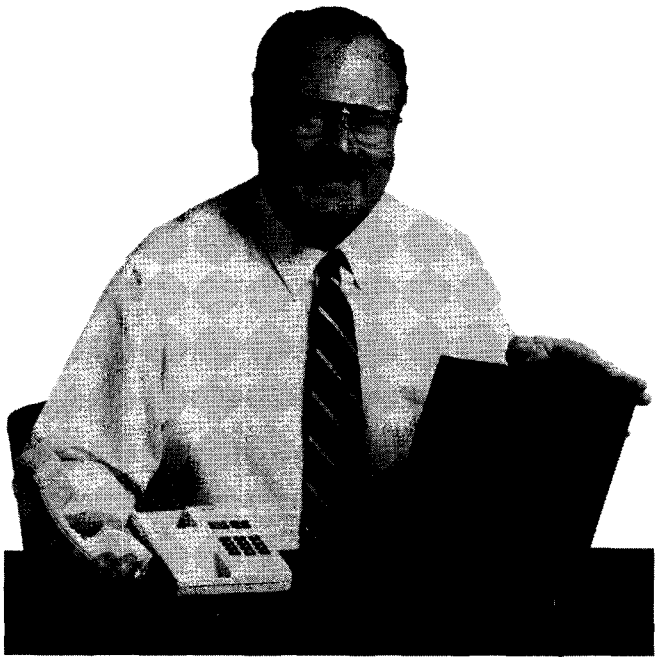
Occasionally your broker may have a good idea.



Joe Ricketts, Chief Executive

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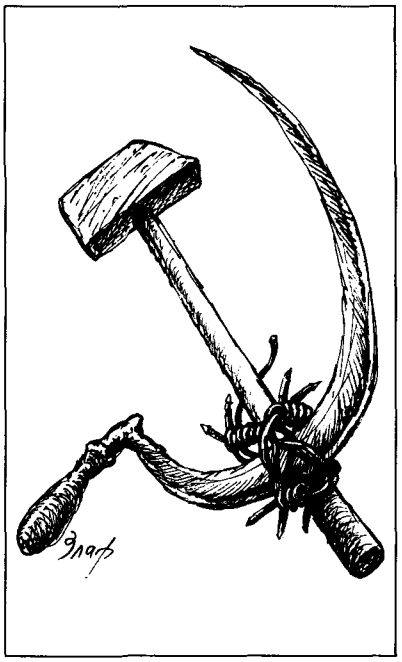

Gulag and After

SOVIET TERROR, AMERICAN AMNESIA

There has been a striking asymmetry between the American responses to the two great mass murders of our century, the Nazi and the Soviet. Why?

PAUL HOLLANDER

IT HAS been customary in our times to make reference to the Holocaust whenever we wish to allude to some unrivaled evil. The Holocaust became the undisputed reference point for self-evident evil, and for good reason. By the same token, words like "Nazi," "Auschwitz," "Storm Troopers," and "Gestapo" are reflexively appended to political or social phenomena we wish to discredit conclusively.

It rarely happens that self-evident evil is denoted by reference to the mass murders committed in the Soviet Union under Stalin. Words like "Soviet," "Soviet Communist," "Kolyma," or "KGB" are rarely used to discredit political movements and practices. It is doubtful that one in a thousand Americans knows what Kolyma was, or would recognize the name of a single Soviet concentration camp. It is just as unlikely that one in a thousand Americans has heard the names of Beria, Serov, Yagoda, or Yezhov, who used to be in charge of the Soviet mass murders.

Indeed, as Soviet mass graves have been discovered, one after another, in the last few years, the American media have greeted the discoveries with remarkable equanimity. One alone, in Kuropati, near Minsk, was estimated by Soviet sources to contain over a quarter-million remains; Bykovnia, near Kiev, a similar number, killed during the 1930s. No Russian reporters or officials appeared on our television screens to comment on these discoveries, and no American television correspondents reported breathlessly from the scene. We were also spared the reflections of academic specialists regarding the significance of these findings for a reassessment of the Soviet mass murders.

It is not my purpose to dispute the uniqueness of the Holocaust. The question here raised is why, in comparison to the intensity of the moral outrage evoked by the Holocaust, the Soviet mass murders have stimulated so little moral energy.

Genocide or Mass Murder?

IT IS tempting to suggest that the differences between the character and procedures of the Nazi and Soviet mass murders account for the different moral responses to these slaughters.

In Nazi Germany the state set up highly efficient extermination plants (gas chambers, crematoria) with no less a goal than the total elimination of the Jewish population of Europe, perhaps some day of the whole world. It was a carefully planned, highly organized operation that had spectacular results: the killing of six million Jews and smaller numbers of other "undesirables."

These mass murders gave rise to the term "Holocaust" and popularized the concept of "genocide"—so much so that since the 1960s it has been applied with diminishing discrimination to far lesser outrages, such as the "cultural genocide" of some minority underrepresented in institutions of higher education, or policies of proposing birth control to unwed mothers. Radical feminists called pornography "genocide"; for some "experts" of the "recovery movement," childhood is a "holocaust"; the homosexual organization Act-Up asserted that "Dinkins's policy is genocidal."

The Soviet mass murders were in significant ways different from the Nazi ones. There was no plan corresponding to the "final solution" (the killing of a group of people in order to purify the world of evil); no partic-

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ular ethnic group was singled out for total elimination; indeed, the victims came from every social stratum and ethnic group of Soviet society. There were no extermination camps using modern technology and machinery. The victims were killed in relatively old-fashioned and inefficient ways: either shot or allowed to die of starvation, cold, and disease in what the Soviet authorities called "corrective labor camps." (According to Mikhail Heller and Aleksandr Nekrich, two Russian émigré historians, "it was Lenin and Trotsky who were the first Europeans to use the term 'concentration camp'" as early as 1918.)

On the other hand the total number of the Soviets' victims was far greater than the Nazis', if we add in those who were victims of politically induced famine and deportations. According to General Volkogonov, head of the parliamentary commission on rehabilitation, "from 1929 to 1953 . . . 21.5 million people were repressed. Of these a third were shot, the rest sentenced to imprisonment where many also died." These figures did not include famine victims and deported ethnic groups.

A large portion of the Soviet victims, some might argue, were not actually killed, they just could not survive the harsh living conditions in the camps, including the bad weather, not subject to human control. These living conditions, some might further contend, resulted less from ill will or deliberate policy than from overall backwardness, sloppiness, and even the needs of the economy. After all, slave labor was badly needed to carry out the great projects of the early five-year plans, and if mortality rates were high, these regrettable sacrifices were exacted to accomplish worthy objectives. There was one striking expression of a matchless cynicism the two camp systems had in common. At the entrance to the Nazi camps were signs reading "*Arbeit macht frei*" (Labor liberates), while over the gates of Kolyma there was the inscription "Labor is a matter of honor, courage, and heroism."

Doubting the Soviet Record

ANOTHER possibility is that it was the relative paucity of information about the Soviet mass murders that explains the different moral reactions. While in the post-Stalin era the quantitative dimensions of Soviet mass murders began to emerge, they remained an abstraction for the public at large, even for the well educated. As Arthur Koestler noted half a century ago: "Statistics don't bleed; it is the detail that counts." And when gradually the details were furnished by the survivors' accounts, they were often denigrated (especially by the revisionist historians) for being too personal and emotional to be treated as reliable.

At the end of World War II the Nazi system was destroyed; cameramen freely entered the former camps; archives were opened; many perpetrators of these crimes were interrogated, studied, and brought to justice. A substantial portion of American and European populations were exposed to pictures of gas chambers, crematoria, heaps of corpses, emaciated survivors.

So long as the Soviet system was a going concern, little corresponding information about the Soviet camps was available. Western reporters and social scientists could not explore former or existing camps to reconstruct the past. Until Gorbachev came into power the Soviet system was highly secretive.

Still, lack of information as such was not decisive. There was *some* information already in the 1930s, more after World War II (including the work of Dallin and Nicolaevsky published in 1948), and much more following Khrushchev's de-Stalinization campaign starting in 1956. Robert Conquest's massive pioneering work, *The Great Terror*, has been available since 1968. In 1978 he published *Kolyma: Arctic Death Camps*, a stunning study of the most murderous Soviet camps. There were even some comparative accounts (based on personal experience) of Nazi and Soviet concentration camps, such as *Under Two Dictators* by Margarete Buber and Gustav Herling's *World Apart*.

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But these works attracted little public attention and sparked little moral outrage; it is this tepid reaction that invites further inquiry.

The controversy that surrounded Viktor Kravchenko is a case in point. The flower of the French intelligentsia vilified Kravchenko (a Soviet defector and author of two important books) in the late 1940s and ridiculed his allegations about Soviet camps. The attitude of the Left in the United States was no more charitable. A reporter for *The Nation* sneered in 1949: "The man [Kravchenko] is very cheap . . . What he lacks is distinction and culture . . . he is also a very poor propaganda agent. He commits mistakes by exposing his hand at points where the game demands that he hide it."

At the time of his defection (in 1944) *Time* magazine had written: "Editorial comment [on him] was minimum and cautious. Most U.S. editors, mindful of the delicacy of U.S.–Soviet relations . . . and of the 26-year-old difficulty in getting at truth in any item dealing with Russia, did not want to stick out their necks."

More recently Noam Chomsky expressed (also in *The Nation*) grave doubts about the credibility of Cambodian refugees and their accounts of the massacres perpetrated by the Pol Pot regime.

It must also be recalled that after World War II over two million Soviet refugees in Western Europe (prisoners of war and slave laborers taken by the Germans) were forcibly repatriated with the assistance of British and American troops—an event that failed to generate widespread moral outrage at the time.

The collapse of the Soviet Union created a new situation. It has now become possible to construct a visual (as well as historical-statistical) record of its dark deeds, to visit former camps and newly discovered mass graves, to interview survivors and relatives of victims. While there have been a few reports, American journalists have not been flocking to the sites of Soviet mass murders; camera crews have not been recording the remains of the Gulag Archipelago. (Rare exceptions include a 1989 *60 Minutes* segment about the "last political prisoners" in the Perm 35 camp; a segment on Kuropati mass graves in the PBS program "Inside Gorbachev's Russia," produced by Hedrick Smith; a March 1990 *National Geographic* article entitled "Last Days of the Gulag?" and a March 1993 *New York Times Magazine* article on the discovery of skeletons in Kolpashevo, Siberia.)

There have been no television documentaries of the Gulag, not on public television, CNN, or the networks. Russian television programs about these mass murders have not been shown on American television. No Hollywood movie has attempted to show any aspect of Soviet repression and terror, with the partial exception of *Dr. Zhivago*. (There was one English film based on Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, and an American cable TV film in 1985 entitled *Gulag* that was more of a spy thriller.) There have been no conferences or symposia comparing the Nazi extermination camps to the Gulag Archipelago; no inquiry into the applicability of the "obedience to authority" theory of mass murders (devised by Stanley Milgram to explain Nazi murderousness).

It is not unreasonable to believe that the same political predispositions which in recent times expressed themselves in ridiculing the idea that the Soviet Union was an evil empire played a part in the neglect of the topic of the Soviet mass murders.

No Moral Equivalence

THOSE left-of-center on the political spectrum and most deeply estranged from American society seemed to have had the greatest difficulty expressing moral indignation about the Soviet atrocities—even when their existence was no longer in doubt.

If there ever was a book one would have expected to delve into the moral dimensions of the Soviet mass murders, it was *Sanctions for Evil: Sources of Social Destructiveness*, a collection of 18 essays by American social scientists published in 1971. The dust-jacket made clear, however, that the moral concerns of the editors and contributors would not extend to the outrages perpetrated by the Soviet Union and other Communist systems: "My Lai. Biafra. Detroit riots. Hiroshima. Dachau. Lynchings. Indian massacres. Salem witch hunts. Spanish Inquisition. Dynastic wars. The crusades. The inventory is endless."

The endless inventory had no room for the victims of the Soviet Purges and labor camps. The only reference in the entire book to Communism or Communists was as victims of persecution in the United States; fear of Communism was a pathology of American society. There was also a vigorous defense of the exclusion of those on the Left from the famous study of the authoritarian personality.

In 1969 Michael Parenti, a political scientist and relentless critic of American society, had this to say about Soviet camps:

> For many years anti-Communist writers claimed that at any one time, anywhere from 15 to 25 million Soviet citizens were suffering the horrors of slave labor camps . . . By such statistics, the sum total of people incarcerated . . . over a 25-year period would have consisted of an astonishing proportion of the Soviet population; the support and supervison of labor camps would have been Russia's single largest enterprise. That the USSR could have maintained this kind of prison population is, to say the least, highly questionable.

Another illustration of these attitudes has been the fate of a remarkable document published in English in 1980, *The First Guidebook to Prisons and Concentration Camps of the Soviet Union*. It was put together by Avraham Shifrin, a former inmate of these camps. This massive and meticulous work provided information about two thousand penal institutions, complete with maps, charts, and even some photographs; it also included a list of 41 "death camps," "where prisoners, forced to work under dangerous, unhealthy conditions for the So-

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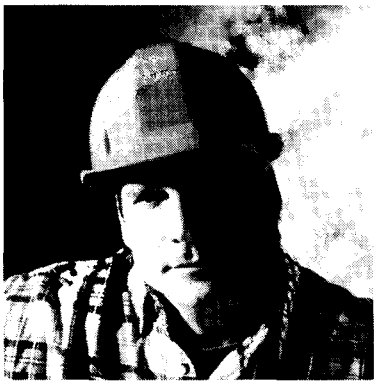

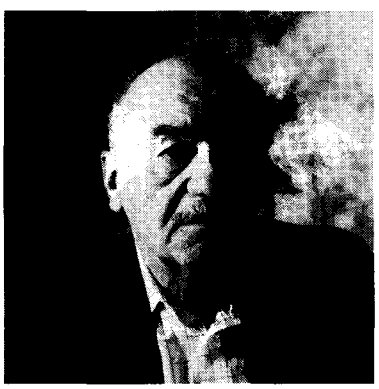

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viet war machine, face virtually certain death." The book was barely noticed; its author did not appear on talk shows, and it received a total of two short reviews in the United States in publications few people read.

A memorable example of the mindset here examined was reflected in a 1987 public-television program entitled "The Faces of the Enemy," produced by Sam Keen, better known as the author of *Fire in the Belly*, a popular male consciousness-raising book. The program was designed to explore the links between dehumanization, political propaganda, and extremism, yet made virtually no reference to such phenomena when manifested by Communist movements or systems. (I wrote to Mr. Keen pointing out the one-sidedness of the program but got no reply.) While the atrocities associated with Nazis, right-wingers, and U.S. policy in Vietnam were well covered, there was no reference to Stalin, Mao, the Cultural Revolution, or Pol Pot.

This historic amnesia and asymmetry is also apparent in high-school textbooks in social studies and contemporary history, which rarely make reference to the Soviet (or other Communist) mass murders alongside the Nazi ones. Teaching at a large public university for a quarter-century I have yet to encounter a student who was aware of the Soviet mass murders before entering the university; the majority graduate without learning of such matters.

It should be noted that while social scientists in general paid little attention to the Soviet mass murders, there were important exceptions, notably Irving Louis Horowitz, author of *Taking Lives: Genocide and State Power* (1982), and Terence Des Pres, author of *The Survivor: An Anatomy of Life in the Death Camps* (1976). Both examined comparatively the Nazi and Soviet mass murders and concentration camps.

But as the so-called revisionists (their common denominator was a rejection of the totalitarian model and a less critical view of the Soviet system) became more prominent in Soviet studies during the 1970s and '80s new attempts were made to minimize the Soviet mass murders. Best known for these efforts has been Professor J. Arch Getty, who sought to bring new perspectives

In Memory

AT LONG LAST there will be some official American recognition of the victims of Communism. The U.S. Congress has passed, and President Clinton has signed, a public law authorizing an international memorial—for which a private organization, the Victims of Communism Memorial Fund, is raising money—to be constructed at "an appropriate location within the boundaries of the District of Columbia," i.e., on the Mall, where millions of tourists and every American President can see it.

In their deliberate mass murder of civilians, the Communists are the blood-stained world champions. According to conservative estimates, more than 100 million people have been murdered by the Communist rulers of the Soviet Union, China, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Eastern Europe since the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The killing continues in countries like China today.

A few dedicated scholars, starting with Robert Conquest, have written about the Communist holocaust. Conquest's *The Great Terror*, published in 1968, was the first work to suggest the magnitude of Stalin's murders. Later, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn carefully detailed the operation of the Soviet Union's slave-labor camps in *The Gulag Archipelago*. Now R. J. Rummel, in his epic work-in-progress on what he calls *democide* (the killing of peoples), suggests that even these works may have underestimated the magnitude of this holocaust.

Drawing upon sources ranging from Conquest to Solzhenitsyn and using a conservative mathematical formula, Rummel calculates that approximately 61.9 million people were murdered by the Communist government of the Soviet Union in the seven decades between 1917 and 1987.

This mass killing included the wholesale murder of several hundred thousand Don Cossacks in 1919, the starving to death of about 5 million Ukrainian peasants in 1932–33, the extermination of perhaps 6.5 million kulaks (well-off peasants) from 1930 to 1937, the execution of 1 million Party members in the Great Terror of 1937–38, and the massacre of all Trotskyists in the Gulag.

Attempting to explain how Lenin and Stalin could knowingly command the death of millions, Solzhenitsyn wrote: "Ideology—that is what gives evildoing its long-sought justification and gives the evildoer the necessary steadfastness and determination. That is the social theory which helps to make his acts seem good instead of bad in his own and others' eyes, so that he won't hear reproaches and curses but will receive praise and honors."

An image that came to Conquest's mind when thinking of Stalin was Goya's *Saturn Devouring his Children*. But Stalin was Saturn magnified one million times, for the Soviet dictator devoured men, women and children, the equivalent of entire nations. Milovan Djilas said bluntly: "All in all, Stalin was a monster."

But his crimes against humanity were almost equaled by those of another monster, the Great Helmsman of China, Mao Tse-tung. Rummel estimates that from 1949 through 1987, the Chinese Communists killed 38.7 million Chinese, Tibetans, and other minorities. Communist democide has been four times more deadly for the Chinese people than all the wars and rebellions of this century in which China has been involved, including the Boxer Rebellion and the Sino-Japanese, Korean, and Civil Wars.

For Chinese Communists, the enemy was the landlord, the wealthy

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to the Purges, treating them largely as an administrative procedure whereby certain Party members are periodically expelled. He also sought to discredit the accounts of the surviving Soviet camp inmates. More recently Professor Getty in a journal article arrived at higher estimates of the number of victims but in another recent publication, edited by Professors Getty and Roberta Manning (*Stalinist Terror: New Perspectives*, 1993), there is a renewed effort to keep the numbers down. More interesting, however, from the standpoint of the moral response to such matters, is the interpretation of the outrages acknowledged. The pursuit of detachment brings back a remark Czeslaw Milosz made in his *Captive Mind* forty years ago:

> From the moment we acknowledge historical necessity to be something in the nature of a plague, we shall stop shedding tears over the fate of the victims. A plague or an earthquake does not usually provoke indignation. One admits they are catastrophes, folds the morning paper, and continues eating breakfast.

What one finds in the new analysis, if not exactly an evocation of "historical necessity," is certainly akin to a plague or earthquake. Getty and his colleagues are anxious to diminish both Stalin's personal responsibility *and* that of the political system he created; they consider it a mistake to seek "the origins of Stalinist terror in the person of the deranged dictator, the 'administrative system' of the time, or the very nature of Leninism." What then are we left with?

We are left with an explanation of these events which denudes them of a moral focus or definition. Getty and William Chase wrote:

> When the terror erupted in 1936–37, it quickly went out of control, chaotically reflecting personal hatreds [that is, at the local level—P.H.] and propelling itself with fear. Explanations of the terror . . . should be supplemented by approaches that account for lack of coordination, local confusion, and personal conflicts.

"Uncoordinated" terror reduces the responsibility of the political system—as do "local confusion" and

peasant, the middle class, all to be exterminated or "won over." They set out to transform the most populous nation in the world into a Communist society, regardless of the cost.

Mao reveled in the blood-letting, once boasting: "What's so unusual about Emperor Shih Huang of the Chin Dynasty? He had buried alive 460 scholars only, but we have buried alive 46,000 scholars."

IT IS understandable that Communists would be still as a grave about their blood-stained history, but what excuse do liberals offer for their silence?

Lincoln Steffens laid down the liberal dictum decades ago when he declared: "Treason to the Tsar wasn't a sin; treason to Communism is."

Whether or not most American intellectuals would express that credo so openly, they clearly live by it. There was, for example, Professor Paul Samuelson's confident assertion in 1976 that it was "a vulgar mistake to think that most people in Eastern Europe are miserable." There was Professor Jerry Hough's argument that Brezhnev's regime was a modern pluralist state much like our own. Hough is most (in)famous for insisting in print and on television that the number of victims of Stalin's purges was really rather low: "A figure in the low hundreds of thousands seems much more probable than one in the high hundreds of thousands, and even tens of thousands is quite conceivable, maybe even probable."

There was John Kenneth Galbraith, the man of a thousand opinions, who wrote in 1984, just a few months before Mikhail Gorbachev proclaimed an economic crisis: "That the Soviet system has made great material progress . . . is evident both from the statistics and from the general urban scene. . . . One sees it in the appearance of solid well-being of the people on the streets. . . . Partly the Russian system succeeds because, in contrast with the Western industrial economies, it makes full use of its manpower."

For the Princeton Sovietologist Stephen F. Cohen, the critical issue of the 1980s was not the invasion of Afghanistan, or the aiming of SS-18s and SS-20s at Europe, or the right of Soviet Jews to emigrate, but the necessity of accepting Moscow's proper place in the world community. He denied the Soviet Union was a "closed" society (Andrei Sakharov was apparently a figment of the CIA's imagination). In fact, Cohen claimed that the post-Stalin leadership enjoyed a high level of popular support because it had made good on basic promises like comprehensive welfare protection and improved living standards for each succeeding generation.

Such staggering statements continue to be made. In 1992, Sovietologist Robert W. Thurston roundly criticized a brochure that the Library of Congress published about a Soviet exhibit because it "highlighted only the repressive nature of the Soviet regime, ignoring its positive [though] flawed accomplishments." "Nothing appeared," he complained, "on the growth of education, upward social mobility, increased availability of medical care, urbanization or anything that might be considered positive." There was indeed considerable "upward social mobility" in the Soviet Union, as Arnold Beichman has noted, after Stalin executed several thousand marshals, generals, and other officers in the 1930s. In allowing lieutenants to become colonels and captains to become generals, Stalin gave new meaning to the term *meritocracy*.

But being liberal means never having to say you're sorry, and one wonders whether, for these people, the Victims of Communism monument will be any more visible than the victims it memorializes.

—LEE EDWARDS

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"personal conflicts." Earlier in the same volume Getty and Manning also suggest (as they refer to the writing of Gabor Rittersporn, another of the revisionists) that

> Stalin . . . Ezhov [chief of the NKVD] and highly placed NKVD operatives *sincerely believed* [my emphasis] that the nation was riddled with plots and conspiracies . . . He [Rittersporn] intimates that this response was rooted in traditional rural beliefs that the machinations of evil spirits accounted for commonplace misfortunes . . . Rittersporn's work suggests that the elements of pre-revolutionary rural culture helped fuel Stalinist persecutions, under the impact of . . . scarcity . . . and leaders who shared, politicized and used such traditional beliefs.

What Getty and his colleagues here suggest is that conspiratorial fantasies sincerely entertained help to explain the terror and possibly also its spontaneous, uncoordinated aspects. (The Nazis too sincerely believed in conspiracies, and especially the Jewish world conspiracy, which in no way undermined their ability to devise efficient ways to get rid of the Jews, nor was the outside world inclined to diminish their responsibility on account of these delusions.) In turn, the non- or pre-Soviet factors—the "pre-revolutionary rural culture" and "traditional rural beliefs"—are enlisted to further dilute the responsibility of the Soviet system.

Elsewhere in the volume Roberta Manning wrote:

> In the late 1930s, reformist efforts gave way to terror under the impact of the desperate conditions of the times. Political, social and economic tensions, aggravated by the onset of German expansionism, the sudden escalation of ongoing border conflicts with the Japanese in Manchuria, the 1936 crop failure, and national decisions to prosecute former members of defunct opposition movements created a tense political climate.

When all is said and done "the new perspectives on Stalinist terror" proffer an exceedingly wide range of factors and explanations, all of which appear independent of human political will. It is an approach that relieves the commentator from facing questions of moral responsibility or experiencing a sense of outrage.

The moral sensibility here discussed has not been limited to Americans. A small empirical study of my own (reported in my book *Anti-Americanism*, 1992) revealed a similar pattern among a group of Canadian academics. When asked (in a mail questionnaire) to list the most shocking historical events in this century, in the first instance 52 per cent chose the Holocaust while virtually nobody mentioned any Soviet outrage. In the second instance 15 per cent made reference to Stalin's Purges. Further light was shed on these attitudes when, in response to the question whom they considered the least admirable political leaders in this century, Reagan was nominated in the first instance by 29 per cent, Stalin by 8.5 per cent.

Another telling illustration is the widespread ridicule President Reagan was subjected to for referring to the Soviet Union as "the evil empire." So self-evidently wrongheaded was this attribution that no one bothered to explain why exactly it was so laughable.

The unpopularity of Solzhenitsyn among American liberals and left-of-center intelligentsia is yet another reflection of this mindset. His unhesitating association of the Soviet system with evil, his fiery anti-Communism and determination to give it a moral dimension, did not go down well. It was admissible to express regret or sorrow over the Soviet mass murders, but moral outrage was overdoing it. He also committed the unforgivable offense, Tom Wolfe noted, of suggesting that not only Stalinism and Leninism, but Marxism and the pursuit of Marxist socialism led to the camps. Joseph Brodsky thought that Solzhenitsyn's unpopularity had to do with the "disturbing evidence" he presented which threatened the "mental fence that was constructed especially by the Western Left" around the topic of Soviet atrocities.

There is one notable similarity between responses to the Holocaust and the Soviet mass murders: in both instances there have been efforts to dispute the magnitude of the killings. However, Holocaust revisionists have been regarded as cranks and frauds. By contrast Professor Getty and his colleagues, although criticized by some, were hardly read out of the scholarly community. Purge revisionism has been more acceptable than Holocaust revisionism.

At a time when at last the Soviet Union joined Nazi Germany among the great defunct tyrannies of modern history and perpetrators of mass murder unrivalled in scale, there is new relevance to the question why the revulsion occasioned by the outrages of the Soviet system has been more muted than the corresponding sentiments stimulated by the Nazi misdeeds, especially at a time when new evidence of every kind (from mass graves to archives) has become available.

The Sources of Moral Obtuseness

SINCE public awareness of world events is largely the creation of the mass media, it is important to reiterate that media coverage of Soviet mass murders was largely non-existent while they were committed and sparse in the subsequent decades.

It should also be pointed out that not all Soviet mass murders were committed in the distant past. Spectacular mass murders of civilians were carried out by Soviet forces in Afghanistan under Brezhnev in the 1980s. They too received perfunctory coverage in the media, although it was occasionally noted that the civilians killed numbered in the millions.

If by now it has been established that atrocities of the Soviet system neither deeply penetrated popular and scholarly awareness (except that of a handful of specialists) nor stimulated moral responses comparable to those evoked by the Nazi ones, it remains to attempt to explain this phenomenon.

One explanation may be found in the longstanding, indeed chronic, Western ignorance and misperception of the Soviet system produced by attitudes ranging from

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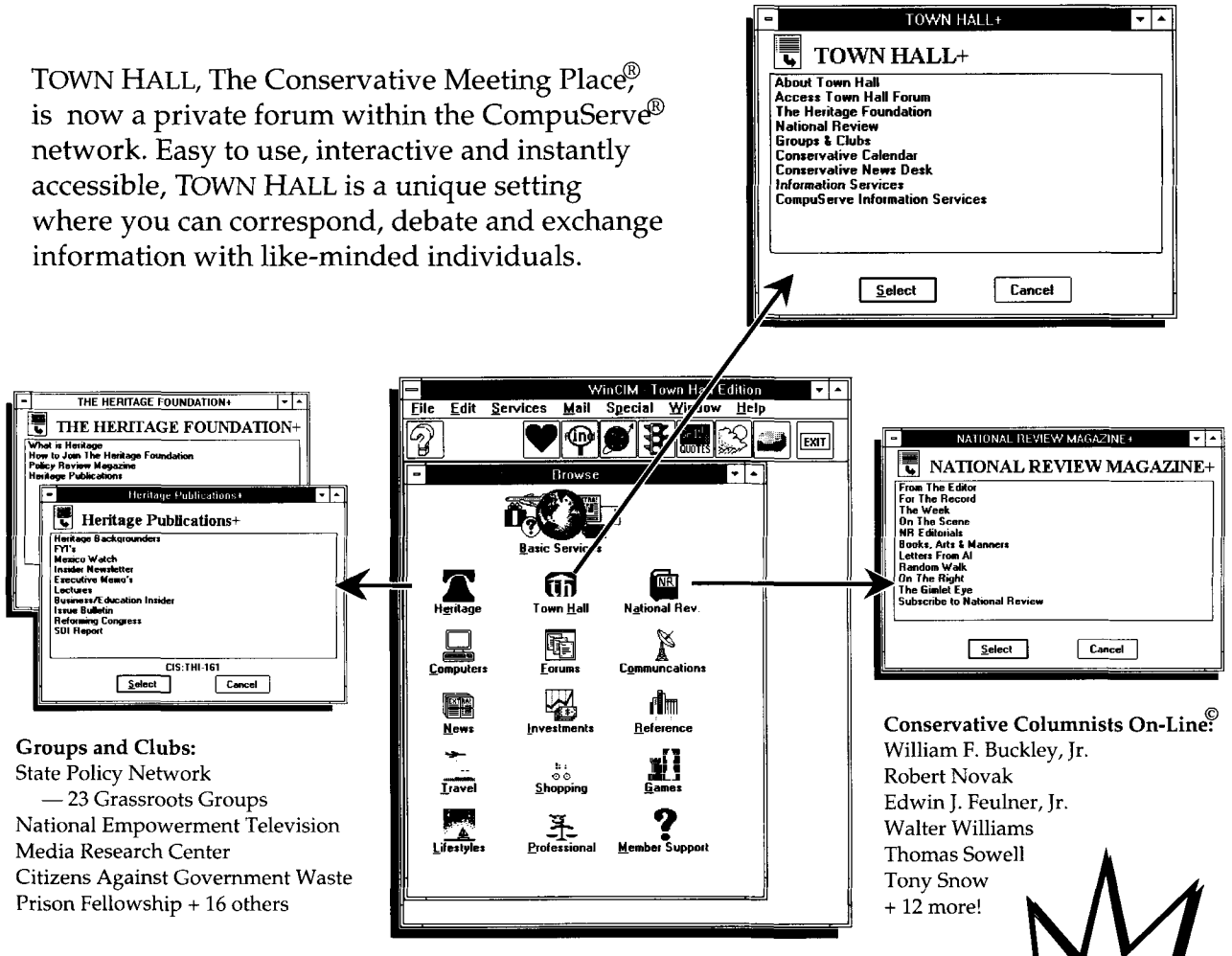

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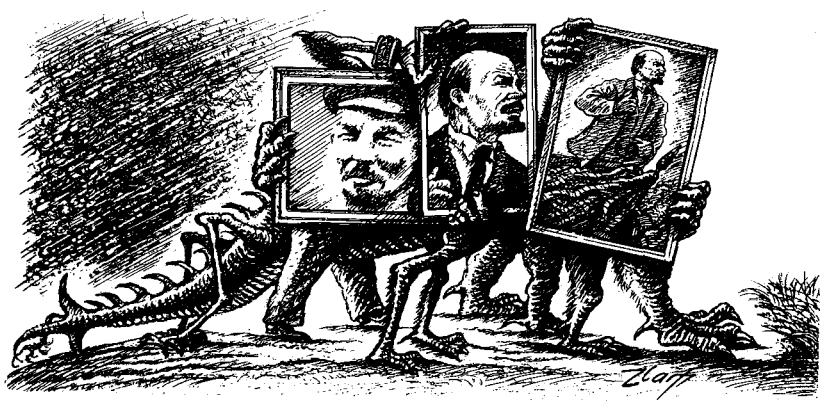
outright affection to benefit of the doubt. It is no longer in dispute that many Americans, and many highly distinguished ones among them, completely misread the nature of the Soviet system through much of its existence and especially during its most murderous decades. What is less widely recognized is how long these wrongheaded assessments persisted and how they might have influenced the moral responses, past and current, to the Soviet mass murders.

The roots of present-day attitudes reach back to the 1930s. In those years, when influential opinion-makers were impressed by the Soviet Union, either they found it inconceivable that such an admirable system could commit mass murder, or they wrote the atrocities off as the reasonable costs of the noble experiment.

Upton Sinclair wrote in 1938 about the collectivization and resultant famines:

> They drove rich peasants off the land and sent them to work in lumber camps and on railroads. Maybe it cost a million lives—maybe . . . five million—but you cannot think intelligently about it unless you ask yourself how many millions it might have cost if the changes had not been made. . . . There has never been in human history great social change without killing.

In the mid 1940s it appeared to Jerome Davis, who was



a professor at Yale Divinity School, that during the Purges

> only a tiny percentage of the population was involved and the same years which saw the treason trials saw some of the greatest triumphs of Soviet planning. While the screws tightened on a tiny minority, the majority of Soviet people were enjoying greater prosperity.

In 1953, seeking to justify violence associated with the Purges, Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy, two American academic Marxists, asked:

> Is violence used to perpetuate a state of affairs in which violence is inevitable, or . . . [is] it used in the interests of creating a truly human society from which it will be possible at long last to banish violence altogether?

This was a rationalization the Nazis could also have gladly endorsed; after all, once they purified the world of Jews there was not going to be any further need for violence.

Thus to the extent that the Soviet mass murders and political violence were confronted by those on the Left, and especially the far Left, they were morally neutralized by the time-honored device of viewing them as regrettable means to glorious ends. Legitimizers of Soviet violence were interested only in the ends and knew little of the means, nor were they anxious to learn about them. Sartre provided the most ambitious (and morally repellent) rationalization for this position:

> Like it or not, the construction of socialism is privileged in that to understand it one must espouse its movement and adopt its goals; in a word, we judge what it does in the name of what it seeks and its means in the light of its ends . . .

Even more remarkable, in the 1930s the Soviet prison camps were often viewed as humane institutions of character reform rather than places of slow extermination. According to Anna Louise Strong, they were "remaking criminals." Professor Gillin, a leading authority on penology and former president of the American Sociological Society, averred that "the system is devised to correct the offender and return him to society." Ella Winter was delighted to learn that criminals were not treated as outcasts. Harold Laski (the hundredth anniversary of his birth recently celebrated) had no doubt about the superiority of the Soviet penal system over its Western counterparts. He was also struck "by the excellent relations betwen the prisoners and the warders . . ." (Reference to any such foolishness was missing from the article in the December 1993 *New Republic* entitled "Our Harold," written by his biographer.) The Webbs found the prisons "as free from physical cruelty as any prison in any country is ever likely to be." Maurice Hindus, the veteran reporter on Soviet affairs, concluded that "Vindictiveness, punishment, torture, severity, humiliation have no place in this system." Mr. and Mrs. Corliss Lamont spoke to prisoners who informed them that they did not feel as if they were in prison, and the Lamonts had no difficulty believing this. This was in the 1930s. A decade later Henry Wallace and Owen Lattimore still found much to praise in the notorious prison camps of the Soviet Far East.

During World War II, the wartime camaraderie precluded inquiry into the Soviet outrages. During the classic Cold War years there was a greater readiness to criticize the the Soviet system, but the immediacy of the massive, well-documented evil of the Holocaust

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SAID THE TORTOISE TO THE HARE

VIN SUPRYNOWICZ

ARMCHAIR environmentalists who go to bed confident the twenty-year-old Endangered Species Act is hard at work, efficiently protecting the last few grizzlies in Montana, or the last flight of bald eagles in New Mexico, should probably count themselves lucky that they weren't in Las Vegas to witness the most recent eruption of the Desert Tortoise Affair.

Clark County, Nevada, and the desert tortoise, have been cited more than once of late—by Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, for one—as an example of how a peaceful compromise can be worked out between development and preservation interests. Babbitt has said he would like other preservation conflicts resolved on the model of Clark County's.

Oh boy.

Clark County's struggle started in 1989, when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service unexpectedly exercised its powers under the Endangered Species Act to list the Mojave Desert Tortoise as an endangered species, based on studies showing population densities of the creature had dropped precipitously since the 1950s. The following year, the agency officially declared the tortoise to be "threatened."

(Continues on page West-5)

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THE WEEK IN THE WEST

■ The *Globe* tabloid was found guilty of libel for printing a story that said a Bakersfield, California, farmer was the real assassin of Robert Kennedy. If the paper had only taken the time to check with Oliver Stone, he could have told it that the real assassins were Ronald Reagan, Walt Disney, and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

■ San Francisco's politicians are whining about a budget crisis—$100 million in red ink is projected for next year—but that's not stopping them from shoveling dollars at public employees. More than 200 bureaucrats will "earn" above $100,000 when the latest salary increases kick in this summer. A hefty 6 percent pay hike—at least—is expected for the 8,000 members of the Service Employees International Union, including social workers, janitors and clerks. The total bill for raises for city workers should exceed $65.2 million. It seems cable cars aren't the only things climbing halfway to the stars.

■ The "Promised Land" sculpture recently commissioned by the Oregon Trail Coordinating Council in Portland commemorates pioneer families who made the storied cross-country trek a century and a half ago to God's Country in the Pacific Northwest. Problem is, the father, mother and son whom the sculpture depicts are white. So of course Portland's art bureaucrats have said "No thanks" to the Oregon Trail council, which proposed to give the statue to the city, along with a $50,000 plaza to surround it. Happy trails to you—but only if you're politically correct.

■ Some Democratic legislators in Nevada are feeling hunger pangs: Assemblyman Chris Giunchigliani of Las Vegas and State Senator Diana Glomb of Reno say it's time to "broaden" the state sales tax so it includes groceries, heretofore one of the few commodities exempt from government's bite. The two underfed pols would also like to slap a levy on mortgage and rent payments. Democratic governor Bob Miller has pointedly refused to utter a "no new tax" vow. When you see a politician don a bib, you can never be sure *you're* not on the menu.

■ Stiffer prison sentences will cost too much, complain Assembly Speaker Willie Brown and like-minded California legislators who of course have always been noted for their commitment to public parsimony. Someone should ask them about the truckloads of dollars that private citizens now spend on security measures, from steering-wheel "Clubs," to cans of mace, to home and car alarm systems, to martial-arts tuition, because of the perception that multiple felons have been allowed to lay claim to urban streets. If Mr. Brown can't relate to the fears of average Californians, could it be in part because legislators enjoy their own tax-funded security force, a luxury that can spare a liberal pol the risk of becoming a neoconservative, i.e., a liberal who has been mugged by reality.

■ After drought, floods, mudslides, riots, fires and earthquakes, California now faces the threat of killer bees. But they may turn tail and head back south when they discover Californians are even scarier than they are. A *Los Angeles Times* poll shows that Bill Clinton is now more popular in the Golden State than at any time since his inauguration.

■ A mere "50 cents" threatens to send Charles Ernest Bentley up the river for good, moaned a *Los Angeles Times* story. Bentley "wrestled loose change from a homeless man on Los Angeles Skid Row making him one of the first convicted felons to be charged under California's new 'three strikes and you're out law,'" reported the paper. "He is very, very upset," Bentley's public defender told the *Times*. "He didn't even know what he had been arrested for." Hmm. Makes the Three-Strikes law sound pretty harsh, doesn't it? But as so often, things become clearer when you turn to other news sources. You had to read the *Los Angeles Daily News*

"Money may be the root of all evil, but let's not forget it's also the root of all good."

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to learn that Mr. Bentley (who's been convicted of kidnaping and manslaughter and boasts a 52-page rap sheet) allegedly beat his skid-row victim to a near-pulp in his quest for those four bits. Not quite a hapless victim of an irrational Three Strikes law, in other words. Why do you suppose he was in such an ornery mood that day? Was he short on quarters to buy the *Times*?

■ Rosa Parks, meet seven-year-old Brianna Combash, a mixed-race child in Orange County who's being forced by the "progressive" education establishment. Brianna has had learning difficulties, and her mother wants her to be given an IQ test to help determine the cause. But because the girl is classified as "black," the public schools won't comply with mom's request. California schools, you see, are under a court order not to administer IQ tests to black children (note that although a federal judge handed down this decree some 15 years ago, the system's bureaucrats must endorse it, to judge from their failure to challenge it). Kids of every other ethnic group are allowed these diagnostic tests, but not blacks, based on some cockamamie notion that they think differently from people of different hues. So Colin Powell's kids—or Thomas Sowell's, or Stephen Carter's—would be told by California's education wizards that they're not capable of being tested this way. Once again, liberals expose their own deficiencies as thinkers by treating blacks as intellectual cripples.

■ A California Appeals Court has ruled that the Boy Scouts can, after all, exclude self-proclaimed homosexuals as scoutmasters. Apparently the First Amendment's promise of freedom of association hasn't been entirely interred—although various mad-as-hell activists grabbed their spades as soon as the court's decision came down. Jeff Horton, a gay member of the L.A. School Board, vowed to force the Scouts off school grounds during school hours, as similar civic-minded leaders have already done in San Diego. For the Scouts, more than ever the words of Winston Churchill should be their armor: "(The Boy Scout Movement) speaks to every heart its message of duty and honour: 'Be Prepared' to stand up faithfully for Right and Truth, however the winds may blow."

■ "I was standing in the [White House receiving line]," Hollywood's Donald Sutherland recounted to PBS's Charlie Rose, " . . . and I have never in my whole life encountered any individual, and I include both of them in that, who had impressed me so deeply and so profoundly with their presence and their availability and the possibility that they could, if people helped and supported them, lead this country out of the . . . morass . . . [When] I came out of the room, I was shaking." We would have been, too. Get that man a sedative—if the Health Care Plan will cover it.

Promise on the Right?

RON UNZ, the conservative challenger to Governor Pete Wilson, studied physics at Harvard, Stanford, and Cambridge (where he worked with Stephen Hawking) before becoming a Midas-fingered designer of computer software. So he goes into things apprised of what happens when irresistable forces meet immovable objects: Something's gotta give.

In this case, the immobile entity is Pete Wilson. He has remained the same tribune of the status quo as in 1991, when, in response to "feed me" demands from the bureaucracy, he answered, "How much?" and unveiled the largest state tax hike in history. He chides Bill Clinton for new federal taxes, but the Wilson tax increase was larger per capita.

Mr. Wilson followed up last year by sponsoring, along with Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, another sales-tax hike. If the governor has won points with conservatives by seizing on the immigration issue, his rhetoric is bolder than his policy proposals, most of which would require action in Washington, D.C. rather than Sacramento.

The Ron Unz candidacy is fueled by the frustration of the GOP's Reaganite wing over Mr. Wilson's embrace of Darmanomics (and his disdain for school choice and other reformist ideas). It is indeed an irresistable force in Republican politics, this passion on the Right for small government and low taxes. Pete Wilson—sometimes lauded as a "shrewd" pol in the press—was anything but in setting himself so stubbornly against basic Reaganism.

Ron Unz sounds the right themes: Tax cuts, public-sector trimming, "computers not condoms" in public schools. He is no gadfly candidate; he is spending millions of his own dollars; he projects the kind of can-do, private-sector competence that helped Richard Riordan become mayor of Los Angeles. Deposing a sitting governor in a party deferential to incumbents is a tall order. Still, the Unz camp sees signs far and near of the fragility of the Old Order: the collapse of political elites in Canada and Italy; the Perot phenomenon; Riordan's triumph.

At the very least, the Unz candidacy will for "give" in the political discussion. The tax issue will now be front and center. And Pete Wilson may finally move Right in substance (he could start by pink-slipping his education advisor, Maureen DiMarco, foe of vouchers and friend of bilingual-ed). If Unz achieves nothing more than shifting the center of debate—and giving Wilson a scare—he'll have performed a high service.

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WEST WORLD

■ **Marilyn Brewer** is the liberal in the GOP primary race in the Newport Beach–area district. Given **Barry Goldwater**'s ode to **Hillary Clinton** —"a good women. I think the President is smart enough to listen to her" —it's no surprise he has just endorsed Brewer. She is founder of Women in Leadership, which backs candidates "regardless of political party, who support abortion rights." . . . Commenting on proposed ethics bill for Washington State lawmakers, Democratic State Senator **Adam Smith** from Kent offered a ringing argument for term limits: "I have no marketable skills that were going to make me rich, so my only alternative was to run for office. And now I see all the power I worked so hard to get being stripped away." His words drew "a rousing round of applause from his colleagues, who feel equally beleaguered," reported *Spokane Spokesman Review*. . . . New Math in Olympia? When the current session of the Washington State legislature began, Democratic Gov. **Mike Lowry** promised a $90-million reduction from last year's $16.2-billion budget. But by the time the session ends, the budget will have grown $167 million. . . . Republican Assemblyman **Paul Horcher** of the San Gabriel Valley cast the deciding vote for Wilson's tax-increase budget. So few are surprised that Horcher has signed the ballot argument against Proposition 175, which would write into the state constitution the renter's tax cut (or "credit") that the governor and allies repealed last year. . . . In a profile of **Kathleen Brown**, *Newsweek* acknowledged that the likely Democratic nominee for governor of California is not exactly a heavyweight. She's having trouble articulating a vision, the sympathetic writers gently suggested. A journalist we know once asked Miss Brown what she thought of the "Pay at the Pump" auto-insurance plan pushed by her opponent for the Democratic nomination, **John Garamendi**. Her hard-hitting response: "What do you think about it?" . . . Prior to pinch-hitting as White House counsel, **Lloyd Cutler** was representing term-limit opponents in federal court in Washington State, where a liberal judge ruled in their favor. Wait till the Supreme Court weighs in, vow term-limit boosters, who claim their polls show House Speaker **Tom Foley**'s popularity suffering.

■ Does **Ebenezer Scrooge** work in **Bill Clinton**'s Bureau of Land Management? For years, some residents of the Las Vegas area have kept Christmas by journeying to Christmas Tree Pass on Spirit Mountain south of town to decorate pine trees. BLM says they can save themselves the trip: Anyone adorning trees next year will be ordered to halt. It's all in deference to militants in six Indian tribes, including the **Pima-Maricopa** as far away as Phoenix, who claim Spirit Mountain is a sacred site that must be kept unsullied. Explains **Karen Whitney** of the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, "It should be sacred to all of us." . . . "No Justice, No Pizza" is the slogan of union protestors against Round Table Pizza restaurants in Northern California, Oregon, and Washington. Their beef: most Round Table workers earn minimum wage. But Gov. Pete Wilson's social-welfare director, **Eloise Anderson**, who happens to be black, blasts idea that "minimum wage jobs are bad jobs. To the contrary, they offer a crucial first rung on the employment ladder for young people, and it's time we recognized their value." . . . School's out for illegal immigrants, if former California Assemblyman **Tom McClintock** gets his way. Now a candidate for state controller, McClintock says he'd refuse to sign any checks for public schooling for the children of illegals. A constitutional showdown would result, he predicts, allowing the Supreme Court to reconsider ruling mandating tax-funded education for these kids. Most of the justices who signed on to that decision have left the court, McClintock notes.

■ **David Horowitz**'s Individual Rights Foundation, which has provided legal defense for victims of campus PC czars, was the subject of favorable news spots on MTV. . . . After **Peter Jennings** of ABC told *TV Guide* that he was searching for conservative policy ideas, **Sally Pipes** of San Francisco's Pacific Research Institute wrote to offer advice. The result: an invitation for Pipes and PRI research director **Steve Hayward** to visit with Jennings at ABC, where they told him about market economics. . . . The *San Jose Mercury News* suspended a female photographer who took and published a photo in the paper of children's blocks arranged to spell "B A LSBIAN." . . . *Los Angeles Magazine* reports that **Otis Chandler**, scion of the *Los Angeles Times* founding family, has been grousing to friends about the paper's "pandering to special interests and PC slants." He'll push for "someone with a Southern California sensibility" to replace Times Mirror chairman **Robert Erburu**, reported to be leaving.

■ Producer and actress **Lee Grant** is among those grateful for an end to the Dark Eighties: "My husband and I, in the 13 films we've made . . . have explored joblessness, the disenfranchisement of farmers and working people, homelessness. . . . I feel relieved and full of hope because we have an Administration which is trying against tremendous odds to address and redress some of these issues for the first time in 12 years." . . . Media critic **Marilyn Duff**, contributing editor of *Dispatches* newsletter, suggests some of Hollywood's continuing hatred for **Ronald Reagan** "may be as simple as petty foot-stomping over his anti-drug policy." She quotes producer **Julia Phillips** (*The Sting*): People "have a joint to hear the music, or have sex, or chat with themselves on a sunny afternoon. That was how it used to be, before Operation Intercept when Ronald Reagan wiped out marijuana." . . . Wise words from MTV's VJ **Kennedy**: "I love **P. J. O'Rourke**. . . . I like **Dan Quayle**. I love **Ronald Reagan**. . . . We need Reagan back. He ruled."

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(Continued from page West-1)

The government decided that 200,000 tortoises had to be preserved on roughly 10,000 square miles in four states, to assure the species's survival. Skeptics asked why 2,000 of the creatures wouldn't be sufficient, and accused government biologists of picking the 200,000 figure out of thin air. Which was pretty much true, though preservationists prefer to call this "erring on the side of caution."

The feds were trampling on the livelihoods of more than just a sparse population of ranchers this time around. Las Vegas, with a population approaching 1 million, is the fastest growing city in America. Almost all that growth encroaches on desert scrub lands—tortoise habitat.

Braking the city's expansion would have been economically and politically insupportable. So the Fish and Wild-

Where Owls Reign

To: Congressman Gerry Studds
From: The California Coalition of Environmental Advocates
Re: Reauthorization of the Federal Endangered Species Act

WE DEEPLY appreciate your continuing effort to block reauthorization of the ESA. We want to encourage you to continue to avoid hearings and the mark-up process. We are close to complete success, and if the law simply remains as it is for another 24 months, the vast bulk of our work will have been completed.

Of course you are well acquainted with the Spotted Owl controversy. Recent investigative work has unfortunately brought to light that more than 6,000 pairs of the owl are living in the forests of the northern third of California. We would have preferred that this data remain off the public screen, but the good news is that each of these pairs possesses a quarantine-capability of thousands of acres. Combined with the listing of the marbled murlett, most of the northern tier of California has been brought under control of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Sacramento Delta remains a concern to us. The effect of the Delta smelt listing will be felt principally in the South as water deliveries are curtailed. The smelt is of limited use, however, in ending urban sprawl around Sacramento and the Bay area. Our activists are working with the Serivce to list quickly a series of species that should effectively bar development in this region for decades. The Center for Conservation Biology at Stanford recently catalogued a dozen species which impact this region. We need time to finalize these listings prior to reauthorization. We expect some of the proposed species to generate considerable opposition. Our efforts will focus on: the California red-legged frog, the California tiger salamander, the Western pond turtle, various fairy shrimp, the ground cricket, the burrowing owl, the loggerhead shrike, the California horned lark, the double-crested cormorant, and the California horned lizard. Each of these species is spread over hundreds of square miles. It is absolutely necessary that at least four or five of these reach endangered status before Congress begins tinkering with the law so it no longer allows species that exist in vast numbers to be declared "endangered."

The central coast from Santa Barbara to Monterey remains a problem. We are not convinced local electorates will remain anti-growth, as the state's economic woes continue. The Service is doing what it can—proposing four species of spineflower as well as the Santa Cruz wallflower, and a few species of kangaroo rat have also proved useful. We need more time, and especially must avoid any careful evaluation of the ESA's generous treatment of subspecies and location population rules.

We have been most successful in Southern California, from Bakersfield to San Diego. The triple play of Stephens's kangaroo rat, desert tortoise, and California gnatcatcher has blanketed land use in the region with an overlay of Service authority.

We are attempting to replicate these tactics with the Coastal cactus wren, the San Diego horned lizard and the orange-throated whiptail, but landowners have moved to broaden the opposition to include local officials concerned about tax base, parents demanding school sites and recreation, and commuters demanding new roads. If reauthorization affects our statutory advantages by defining listing standards or regulatory subspecies definitions, these listings will be stalled.

The vast effects of our earlier listings underscore the need to press ahead even in Southern California. More than 150 square miles have been designated study areas for the rat. The tortoise listing has transferred control of the Califonria desert to the Service, and the gnatcatcher listing is effectively a moratorium on all new development in San Diego County. We can replicate these effects with some time.

We have also targeted species that are silver bullets directed at particular projects which one or more of our partners deems unwise. The plant listings are of course less effective than animal listings, but we are obliged to use what is available. (The adverse public reaction to the listing of the Delhi sands loving-flower fly taught us to shy away from insect listings.) We have only recently seen the listing of the Otay Mesa mint, California orcutt grass and the San Diego button celery. The tidewater goby, the western lily and a number of others all are moving forward and we need some time. We are especially concerned that the Southwestern willow-flycatcher reach protected status before Congress is obligated to examine the Act.

With only a couple of years of delay in reauthorization, we will be in a position that a simple "grandfather" clause will preserve our efforts to date.

Hence our two-year push to load up the list. We thank you for your help. —HUGH HEWITT

Mr. Hewitt, an assistant counsel in the Reagan Administration, is now a natural-resources lawyer and commentator on L.A.'s KCET-TV and KFI radio.

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life bureaucrats bought into a compromise: 22,000 acres of tortoise habitat would be okayed for futher development, provided developers ponied up $250 to $550 per acre for tortoise preservation. That money—more than $10 million to date—would be used by Clark County to buy land for a 400,000-acre turtle sanctuary.

Cattle grazing was banned on these acres, along with off-road vehicles. Harsh fines were imposed on anyone even touching a tortoise, and an urban homo sapiens who crossed paths with one of the shelled creatures was required to notify county authorities, who shelled out $52,000 for special pens to house 40 turtles, while waiting to turn them over to zoos, restore them to the wild, or whatever.

Forty turtles.

Critics pointed out no one was sure how many Mojave tortoises there are, even assuming there is a distinct "Mojave Desert Tortoise," any more than Oregon harbors a separate species of "Northern Spotted Owl."

In fact there are plenty of spotted owls in America, just as there are plenty of desert tortoises. What the weekend environmentalist doesn't realize is that Green activists now identify "subspecies" at the drop of a hat, interpreting the law to require that not merely the species as a whole, but the species in each of its individual habitats, be protected. All in the name of an "ecology" that envisions a world where humans have no place, and where the age-old parade of extinctions and new-species evolution is halted.

And how many tortoises have been turned in? Twenty? Thirty? Try nearly 950—none of which is going to be returned to the wild because they've developed a contagious respiratory infection in captivity. County facilities have become prolific breeding grounds for baby tortoises. Since desert tortoises live at least 50 years, the county predicts it could end up housing up to 10,000 turtles over the next two decades, at a cost of $9 million.

Their solution? Since preservationists already consider the turned-in tortoises to be "lost" from the wild population, the county wants permission to "euthanize" their captive creatures. "Tortoise: Kill it to save it?" cried the *Las Vegas Sun*.

Where are they all coming from?

Mr. Suprynowicz is assistant editorial-page editor at the Las Vegas Review-Journal.

Free-Market Environmentalism

EMIGRANT, MONTANA

STRIKING a blow for common sense in wildlife protection, Federal Judge Harold Ryan last December removed an organism from the federal Endangered Species List. The pencil-point-sized Bruneau Hot Springs snail was the first creature ever booted from the list through court action.

Judge Ryan criticized federal authorities for restricting scrutiny of the scientific data that earned the snail protected status. Hundreds of farm workers in Idaho's Bruneau Valley, whose jobs the snail endangered, now sleep more soundly at night.

Free-market environmentalism offers yet another way to consider these issues. This pragmatic approach to solving ecological problems was showcased at a recent conference here sponsored by the Political Economy Research Center (PERC), based in nearby Bozeman.

Free-market environmentalists argue that compulsory government efforts to protect animals and habitats on private lands often backfire—harming wildlife or terrain while abridging property rights.

They observe that since half of the 800 or so threatened or endangered species are found exclusively on private property, landowners can play a vital role in protecting rare flora and fauna.

Currently, fearful of seeing their land-use rights frozen by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service if a threatened animal is discovered, many property owners regard these creatures with hostility. "Some farmers shoot, shovel, and shut up," when they see an endangered species on their land, says Terry Anderson, a PERC senior associate.

Defenders of Wildlife in Washington, D.C., has a better idea. It launched a $100,000 fund to compensate ranchers for any livestock killed by at-risk gray wolves in Montana.

Since 1987, the fund has paid some $12,000 to a dozen Montanans who suffered wolf-related animal losses. "Our goal is to influence the behavior of landowners who unexpectedly discover wolves on their property," says Hank Fischer of Defenders. "Instead of remaining silent—or, at worst, harassing or killing the wolves—we hope landowners will do what they can to foster the wolf's recovery."

Free-market environmentalism relies on property rights to advance ecological goals. For instance, rock musician Don Henley bought the Walden Woods in Massachusetts, immortalized by Thoreau, to protect them from development. The Nature Conservancy has gained control of over three million sensitive acres and simply let them be.

One market strategy could ease the struggle over the spotted owl. The owl nests in "old growth" forests. Owners of such private lands have been forbidden by the government to harvest trees, sending lumberjacks and land values reeling.

As compensation, the free-marketeers have suggested retiring private old-growth forests in exchange for logging permits on timber-producing acres in federal forests. Alas, "the government does not seem interested in this sort of compromise," says PERC Senior Associate Rick Stroup.

Traditional ecologists and eco-bureaucrats may fear free-market environmentalism as a plot to slice the forests into two-by-fours. But not all do. When Congress finally votes on the reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act, it should weigh the words of John Echeverria. A dyed-in-the-wool preservationist and chief counsel of the National Audubon Society, he conceded to fellow PERC conference participants: "If you can make the market work, it can provide better solutions."

—DEROY MURDOCK

Mr. Murdock is a New York writer and communications consultant.

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Rancher Cliff Gardner of Ruby Valley has researched the question as well as anyone, and he traces the momentum to list the tortoise to a 1979 article by Dr. Kristin Berry in the *Nature Conservancy News*. Berry interviewed Nevada old-timers who remembered a far bigger population of tortoises years ago.

What Berry didn't note, Gardner contends, is that the turtle boom of the early century was atypical, resulting from poisoning of predators. After predator-control programs were later curtailed, the tortoises were on the decline, yes, but toward a natural balance, not extinction.

Gardner's research even suggests that cattle grazing helps sustain turtle populations; dried cow droppings are a source of protein and water.

The tortoise affair is one of many fiascos extinguishing the credibility of the Endangered Species Act. Congress was scheduled to convene hearings in April to consider reauthorizing the measure, but a memo to environmentalists from Erik Olson of the Natural Resources Defense Council urges the process be postponed in light of the increasing momentum for weakening it.

That momentum may be growing almost as fast as the population of tortoises in Clark County, half of them laying eggs even as you read this. □

Playing Games in Phoenix

BOLSHEVIK BASEBALL

WILLIAM P. CHESHIRE

ARIZONA'S Maricopa County, which includes Phoenix and surrounding desert, is on a fiscal joyride of the Washington, D.C., variety. The county is so far in the red—more than $20 million and mounting—that it is desperately laying off employees, including most recently the county manager. Yet the county supervisors voted in late February to fund with money the county doesn't have a stadium the public doesn't want, to accomodate a baseball team that doesn't exist. "Bolshevik baseball," some critics call it.

County Supervisor Jim Bruner, who describes himself as "a fiscal conservative," has staked a claim to this wondrous scheme, but Jerry Colangelo, owner of the Phoenix Suns, probably deserves joint credit. Eager to build on his phenomenal basketball success, Colangelo hopes to persuade Major League Baseball owners to assign an expansion team to Phoenix.

When Bruner approached Colangelo last year with the stadium proposal, he found the irrepressible sports promoter enthusiastic—and shrewd. Colangelo has made millions on basketball precisely because he persuaded Phoenix officials to invest public money in a downtown arena, in many ways a public embarrassment. On a $64 million investment the city has realized a meagre 1.5 per cent a year, plus marginally higher sales-tax receipts from downtown bistros and restaurants. (Undaunted, Bruner describes the arena as "another successful public-private partnership.")

The stadium deal is likely to be worse. The heat will require a shaded stadium, with a sun roof like a Saab's that slides back and forth. Such extras aren't cheap. Under the "partnership" approved by the supervisors, Maricopa County initially will put up $238 million for the stadium, to be raised by a sales-tax increase, and another $15 million if necessary, which the county would have to borrow.

Total stadium cost: $278 million. The county's share: at least 85.6 per cent, for which it is to get back a little more than $3.5 million a year, or a return of about 1.5 per cent.

Given these numbers, it is easy to understand why the voters had to be neutralized before the deal was consummated. (Polls showed the county electorate 2-to-1 against the stadium tax, and Phoenix overwhelmingly voted down such a tax three years ago.) Disenfranchisement was accomplished in the usual manner, by the back door. After that Phoenix vote several years back, an unnoticed amendment was quietly maneuvered through the Legislature, authorizing the Board of Supervisors to evade statutory restrictions on ballpark funding.

As the supervisors took up the issue, backstairs collusion abounded. Board Chairman Betty Bayless, whose family owns property on the stadium site, recused herself from the controversy. But others were less scrupulous.

Bruner, who vigorously backed the stadium project, has announced for the congressional seat now held by Jon Kyl, who wants to replace retiring Senator DeConcini; Bruner's campaign exploratory committee included Colangelo, attorney Joe Garagiola Jr., a partner in the stadium project, and Don Carson, chairman of the Coalition for Major League Baseball.

Colangelo has been helpful to other supervisors as well. He was finance chairman for the campaign of Supervisor Mary Rose Wilcox, who also voted for the tax; and Supervisor Ed King, another tax supporter, got large contributions from Colangelo's partners in the stadium project and law firm for the Phoenix Suns.

Boosters promise millions of people flocking to Phoenix, strewing dollars like confetti. In fact, successful major league teams draw heavily on fans from nearby population centers. The only large city "near" Phoenix is San Diego, a 350-mile drive through desolate and forbidding desert.

A citizens group is challenging the stadium tax in court—its chances are thought to be slim—but popular resistance to socialized baseball has little to do with taxes (the 25-mill levy is not deemed onerous even by passionate critics). Most objections derive from resentment over the way the deal was slipped through, combined with the conviction that private businesses ought to be privately funded.

The notion that government is responsible for entertaining us springs, after all, from imperial Rome, not Republican America. The Founders might think baseball's just fine—but not on the taxpayers' dime. □

Mr. Cheshire is a senior editorial columnist at the Arizona Republic.

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Battle for America

I RECENTLY saw a film which, despite its cinematic flaws, is important. *Gettysburg* is about one of the battles that cost the most lives in the Civil War.

When I got home, I looked up how many Union soldiers were killed. Not because the Confederate side's losses were not tragic, but because I agree with the values for which the Union was fighting—specifically, abolishing slavery. The number killed on the Union side was 360,000 men. Three hundred and sixty thousand Americans died in order to free 4 million slaves. That is a very powerful figure.

I cite it because there is a need for Americans of all colors to be aware of a fact that is not politically correct to note these days: a lot of white Americans were killed or maimed in order to end slavery.

The fashionable thing to say today is that America is racist. I beg those who make that calumny to be prepared to make it when, if there is an afterlife, you meet young Americans who were slaughtered in order to end slavery. And I would like you to be able to say to their orphans, "Your dad got his limbs blown off to end slavery, but it doesn't mean a damn thing to me because white people are racist, and America is a racist society."

I am increasingly impatient with the libel that America is racist. Sure, there are racists in America—of all colors—and racism is of course despicable.

But history is a sobering thing.

Some of the powerful monologues in this film—I checked them in the *Oxford History of the Civil War*—were historically quite accurate.

These people were prepared to die for the Union—and many of them volunteered—because they believed first and foremost that slavery was wrong. They also believed, of course, in the indissolubility of the United States.

But, as one monologue pointed out, these men also believed that America had fashioned something new: namely, that who you are is more important than who your father was. This was utterly new in human history, where background, ethnicity, where you're from, and who your parents were have always been the most important thing—while you, the individual, are of secondary importance. This has been the Great American Challenge: to hold the individual, not the group, sacrosanct.

Yet, today in America, we have massive forces arrayed against this belief—here it is the Left, just as in other parts of the world it is the Right that fights against the belief in the unique sanctity of the individual. Here in America, there is a desire to divide us by race, gender, class; group-think is prevailing. *This group-think is the first potentially successful counterrevolution to the American Revolution in our history*. That belief in the sanctity of the individual was the primary reason the Civil War was fought.

But this American ideal has not been passed on to another generation. The last few generations of Americans have done a very poor job of transmitting to the next generation what it is that renders America distinctive. America, unlike other countries, is an idea, not a place, not an ethnicity, not a race. And the American idea has not been transmitted. Most American kids today could not answer, "What is America for? What is it about? Why was it founded? Why is it different?"

They couldn't answer because they haven't been taught.

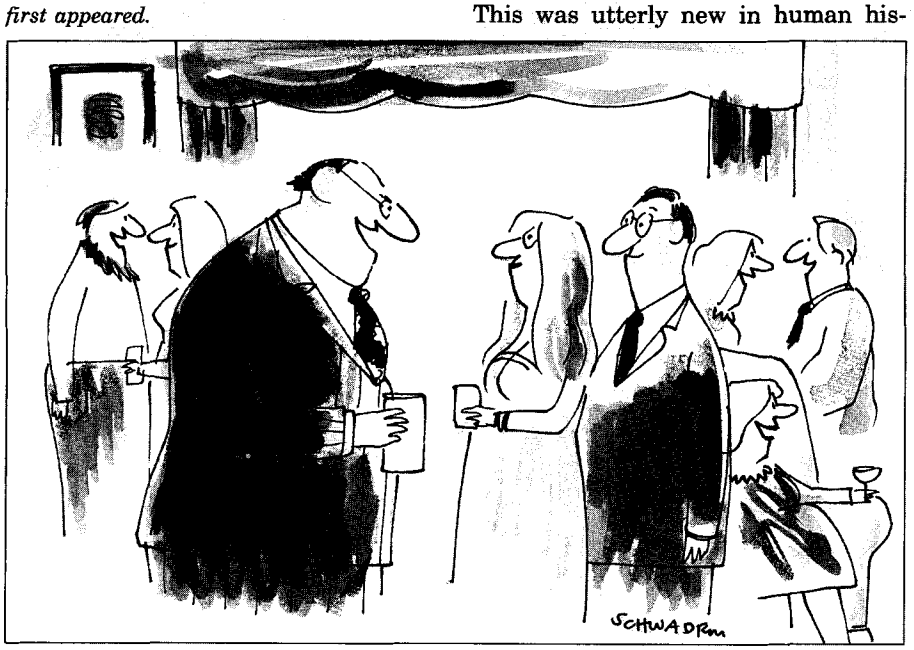
OUR public schools, especially large urban ones, no longer teach these things. They have a Gay Pride Month in the Los Angeles Unified School District, but they don't even have an America Pride *Day*—and my point has nothing to do with gays. It has everything to do with the fact that everything is celebrated except being American. Every group is celebrated. There are St. Patrick's Days, Salute to Israel Days and Black Pride Month. And they're all fine. But if that's all we are—a bunch of diverse groups—then America is nothing. And that is what's happening.

That's what "diversity" is about. It denies the American idea. And the older I get, the more I appreciate America's uniqueness.

These were some of my thoughts on seeing a film that reminded me that 360,000 Americans died to liberate 4 million black Americans.

—DENNIS PRAGER

Mr. Prager writes and publishes the quarterly journal Ultimate Issues *(10573 West Pico Boulevard, #167, Los Angeles, Calif. 90064, 800-225-8584), where this article first appeared.*



"In high school, I was voted 'most likely to succeed with the least talent.'"

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helped to blot out concern with possible Soviet equivalents.

At the end of the 1940s McCarthyism arose and strongly reinforced the attitudes here examined. Ironically, Senator McCarthy achieved exactly the opposite of what he had intended: he succeeded in discrediting, for decades to come, opposition to Communist movements and systems.

In his book-length critique of anti-Communism Parenti linked it to

> patriotic hooliganism, collective self-delusion, the propagation of political orthodoxy, the imprisonment of dissenters, and the emergence of a gargantuan military establishment . . . Abroad anti-Communism has brought us armament races, nuclear terror, the strengthening of oppressive autocracies . . . the death and maiming of American boys and the slaughter of far-off unoffending peoples. . . . [it] brought us grief and shame.

After McCarthy a vocal anti-Communist stand became an embarrassment ("witch hunt," or "Red baiting"), an attitude disdained by self-respecting liberal intellectuals, journalists, and even politicians.

From the 1960s until the rise of Gorbachev in 1985 it was the dread of nuclear war that exerted the major influence on Western perceptions of the Soviet Union. The peace movement successfully promoted the belief that questioning the moral record of the Soviet system would undermine peace. Instead we were urged to focus on matters which our two countries have in common, as for example the love of children and the goodness of ordinary people. Since trust was so ardently sought, it was worse than impolite to seek to unearth Soviet policies of the past (and some of the present) which would have given pause to those in pursuit of good relations.

An 1983 account by a member of an American peace delegation to the Soviet Union was typical: ". . . what we lacked in knowledge we made up in enthusiasm and we shared a . . . faith that women of our two countries were probably more alike than different." It was further argued that "people who cultivate wheat can't possibly want war." Norman Mailer ably summed up these feelings: "We live with the scenario that Russia is an evil force. Now, the world is on the edge of destroying itself. Can we afford abhorrence any longer?" Two prominent peace activists, Drs. Chivian and Mack, even found that Soviet concealment of the Chernobyl disaster was owing to the laudable "tendency on the part of the Soviet leadership to downplay catastrophes and instead offer reassurance to the Soviet people so as to prevent emotional distress." They averred that such practices were beneficial for mental health.

Such attitudes were not limited to peace activists and intellectuals. A Yankelovich survey in 1984 found that younger and better educated Americans were more willing to give the Soviet Union the benefit of the doubt and had more trusting attitudes; their majority believed that "we would be better off if we stopped treating the Soviets as enemies and tried to hammer out our differences in a live-and-let-live spirit."

Whatever the merit of these attitudes for preventing nuclear war, they were not apt to create an atmosphere in which Soviet mass murders could be critically examined and evaluated, comparatively or otherwise.

The peace activists were motivated not only by the fear of nuclear war. There was cross-fertilization between the peace movement and what came to be called the adversary culture. Highly critical of U.S. foreign policy and of traditional American social/cultural values, these movements were disinclined to be critical of any political system which was also critical of their own. Suffused with an acute awareness of the ills of their own country, they were doubtful that any other system could exceed its evils.

It was under these conditions that the concept of moral equivalence between the United States and the Soviet Union emerged. Sam Keen wrote:

> In the current USSR–U.S. conflict, we require each other as group transference targets. . . . We see the Soviets as making the individual a mere means to the goals of the state. They see us as sanctifying the greed of powerful individuals at the cost of community, and allowing the profit of the few at the expense of the many. And so long as we trade insults, we are both saved from the embarrassing task of looking at the serious faults and cruelties of our own systems.

Characteristic of this mindset were the contentions of Richard Barnet in what I once called the definitive handbook on moral equivalence, *The Giants*, published in 1977. He suggested, among many other parallels, that "both societies were suffering a crisis of legitimacy," that "the madness of one bureaucracy sustains the other," and that "each [country] is a prisoner of a sixty-year-old obsession." Marshall Shulman, the well-known Sovietologist and former high-ranking State Department advisor, began a major article in *Foreign Affairs* in 1987 with what became a standard incantation:

> *Both the Soviet Union and the United States* [my emphasis] have been so constrained by parochial domestic interests and weighted down by outworn ideologies that they have been unable to summon up a competent and enlightened management of their affairs . . . proportionate to their respective and common problems.

The images of moral equivalence also deeply penetrated popular culture. Le Carré portrayed the espionage establishments of both the United States and the Soviet Union as corrupt, the Americans often markedly more so, "idiots and/or fascistic puritans . . . objects of authorial loathing" as Walter Laqueur recently observed. James Bond movies made sure that the bad guys were rarely actual KGB agents but rather renegades of some kind, or merchants of death (power-hungry capitalists), or deranged fanatics of no discernible political affiliation giving trouble to *both* superpowers.

There is no doubt that the deeply felt belief in the moral (or immoral) equivalence of the United States and USSR was in large measure responsible for a cli-

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mate in which it was not easy to publicly discuss or evaluate the historic moral outrages of the Soviet system.

It should also be noted that until its actual collapse there was hope (in the West) that the Soviet system could be reformed. The USSR survived much longer than Nazi Germany, and that in itself seemed to prove something. The reforms that followed the death of Stalin, and later Gorbachev's rise to power, provided something of an implicit retroactive justification for the horrors of the earlier era. Could the great sacrifices have been for nothing?

Gorbachev created high expectations of both reform and institutional continuity, so much so that the historian Moshe Levin envisioned (in 1988) a rejuvenated Party and union of states:

> For the party is the main stabilizer of the political system and few groups would back measures likely to erode the integrity of the entire union or the centralized state. The party . . . is the only institution that can preside over the overhaul of the system without endangering the polity itself in the process.

There was new hope, among some American intellectuals, that at long last under Gorbachev socialism with a human face might arise at the birthplace of the deformed system.

Anti-Anti-Communism

AT THE HEART of these asymmetries two principal strands converge. There are on the one hand the remnants of an old pro-socialist idealism that cannot bring itself to believe the worst about a system which at one time was reputed to be the builder of socialism; it is galling for critics of capitalism to rank its arch-enemy as a moral rival of Nazi Germany.

What makes this residual affinity especially compelling as an incentive to ignore or minimize the crimes of the Soviet system is its distinguished lineage, which includes so many eminent American intellectuals and public figures from the 1930s until the Gorbachev era. No list of similar length and distinction could be compiled of American conservatives expressing admiration for Nazism, sympathy for which was largely confined to fringe elements in American politics and public life. And if a recent PBS documentary (*America and the Holocaust*) sought to establish American moral failure regarding assistance to the victims of the Holocaust, there is room for a similar searching look at American attitudes and policies regarding some of the victims of Stalin (in particular the Soviet refugees repatriated to the Soviet Union after World War II) and at the moral restraints which grew out of the wartime cooperation, as well as from illusions regarding the nature of the Soviet system.

The second strand is the hardy heritage of McCarthyism: its unintended discrediting of anti-Communism which gave rise to anti-anti-Communism, a mindset strengthened by the rejection of Western values that emerged in the 1960s.

In the anti-anti-Communist position two contradictory attitudes came together: on the one hand, it was perfunctorily acknowledged that Communist systems (or some of them) were bad, but asserted that this did not justify dwelling on their shortcomings; on the other hand, anti-Communist attitudes were denounced as an obsession, a fantasy, a phobia, a pathology, and a metaphor for everything that was wrong with American society. Once the criticism of and concern with Communism was deemed an aberration, little room was left for freely expressing moral indignation over its misdeeds, including the mass murders of Stalin.

As long as the attitudes here described persist—and especially the sentiment that the evils of American society outweigh all others and disqualify its members from passing judgment on the moral outrages committed by Communist governments—there will be little incentive to confront and reassess the moral implications of the Soviet mass murders. □

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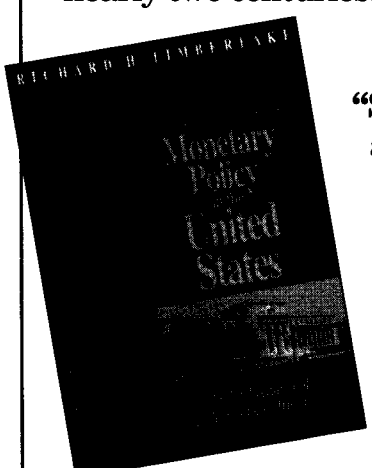

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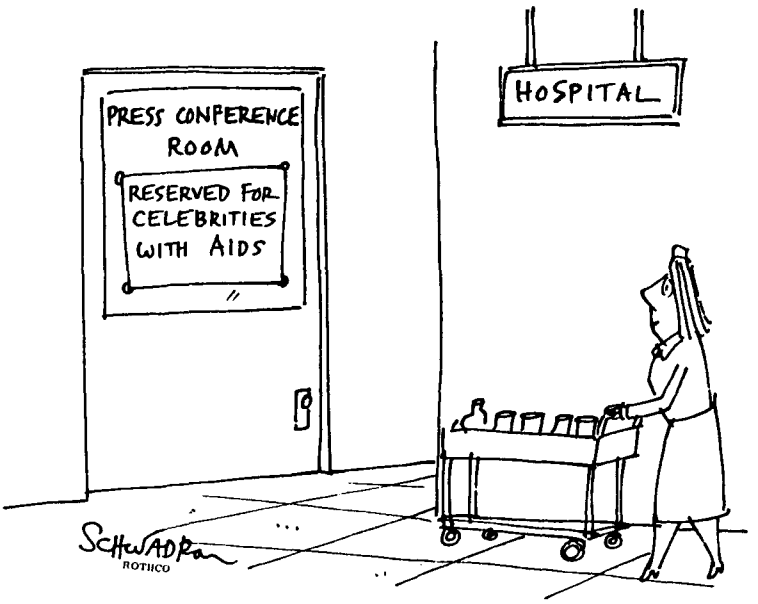
hel

Mr. Hale's Finger

It merely points, unlike the scrawl
That limned Nebuchadnezzar's wall,
But of the two, I'd be inclined
To chance it with the moving kind.

W. H. VON DREELE



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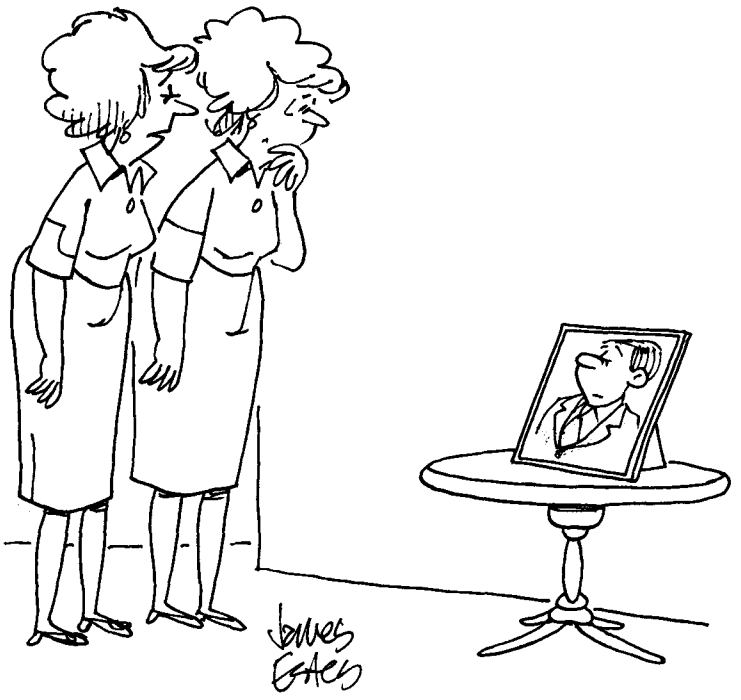

"I was feeding him no-calorie, no-fat, no-cholesterol foods—and one day he just disappeared."

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"I'm a federal judge, fella—I don't need *to have the slightest idea what I'm doing!"*

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South Africa's Elections

DEMOCRACY IN A MEAN SEASON

As the ANC edges ever closer to power, it feels less need to camouflage what its exercise of power will be like. And white liberals, not having intended to exchange one authoritarian rule for another, avert their eyes.

R. W. JOHNSON

LAST YEAR, while acting as an international election observer in Lesotho, I found myself in the company of American colleagues who were, I realized, members of what has become virtually the new international profession of election-observer and democracy-installer: they'd just "done" Kenya, following Namibia, Zambia, Angola, and Pakistan, and they had half a dozen Latin American elections under their belts too. I asked the leader of the U.S. team what preparations he was making to monitor the coming South African election. "Oh boy," he groaned. "That's the eight-hundred-pound gorilla."

This has, so far, proved an accurate assessment. At times it seems as if the election is a vast three-ring violent circus. Certainly, the country is awash with celebrities: film stars like Danny Glover, come to do "voter education" and pretending to a momentary neutrality prior to their photo-opportunity with Nelson Mandela; politicians whose ability to be neutral is even more suspect (Neil Kinnock heads a Labour Party team, for example); rock stars come to clean up on the South African circuit so long off-limits to them; and legions of old South African exiles who can't bear not to be here for the crunch.

Meanwhile, people have been getting killed by the hundreds, especially in Natal. The worst single event has been the shooting dead of Zulu royalists in the streets of Johannesburg, which, together with the accompanying strife in the townships, cost 56 dead in one day, with several hundred more wounded. It seems clear that ANC security guards and activists did most of the shooting. At least, Shell House (ANC headquarters) has now admitted that its men shot into the demonstrating crowd at two separate places. Mystery still surrounds the identity of other sharpshooters who rained lethal fire down on the marchers from other buildings, but there is a widespread presumption that they too were ANC activists shooting at the hated Inkatha masses come, says the ANC, to attack Shell House; come, says Inkatha, to demonstrate in favor of their king. What is disputed by no one is that the marchers had obtained police permission for the march; that they carried spears and sticks but few guns; that they did not fire first; and that their assailants, firing from protected positions inside buildings, suffered no casualties. Mandela has intervened to prevent the police from searching Shell House for weapons or apprehending those who used them—he already has the power to do this sort of thing, a fact with ominous implications for the future rule of law. Meanwhile, Chief Buthelezi has compared the event, inevitably, with the 1960 Sharpeville massacre, in which demonstrators were shot down in a hail of police fire.

Denial Time

GIVEN THE centrality of Sharpeville to the mythology of the anti-apartheid struggle, the ANC's supporters have found this comparison almost unbearably anguishing. The sort of political and emotional acrobatics necessary to reject such a comparison are best seen in the commentaries published in the *Weekly Mail and Guardian*, the main mouthpiece of white pro-ANC liberalism. Editorially, the *WM&G*'s strongest criticism was reserved for the police for not keeping better order—an odd attitude when one considers that no police force in the world can do much when faced with well-armed and hidden snipers firing into a dense street crowd. Rather embarrassingly for this point of view, the two peace monitors in charge pronounced the Zulu march to have been perfectly orderly, an assertion that naturally drew bitter criticism from the *WM&G*—which went on to suggest that the mystery snipers may have been "Inkatha members, using the old French World War I tactic of firing on their own lines to get the troops' blood

Mr. Johnson, a fellow in politics at Magdalen College, Oxford, was a South African Rhodes Scholar. He writes on South Africa for the London Times, *the* London Review of Books, *and* The New Statesman.

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up." The main *WM&G* reportage of the massacre goes even further, comparing the behavior of the leader of the Zulu march to the Nazis' Kristallnacht pogrom against the Jews. The point of such comparisons is surely to suggest a figure of such pure evil that one should be not just pardoned but actually congratulated for gunning such people down.

The reason for this particular sort of madness is that many liberal whites have made an enormous emotional investment in the ANC because they cannot bear to believe that the next government is likely to be just as authoritarian and corrupt as the old one. It is very frightening to know you have to live with the ANC in power if you also believe it capable of carrying out its own little Sharpevilles. Similarly, it is scary to stand on the verge of ANC rule if you accept that the ANC–Inkatha battle is a struggle between two equally ruthless brands of African nationalism, but very much less scary if you can convince yourself that Inkatha is evil to the point of Nazism.

Revolutionary Madness

BUT MANY other forms of madness proliferate in the revolutionary atmosphere. One realizes, indeed, that this is what has been missing from one's appreciation of the French, Russian, and other revolutions: that the process, and even more the prospect, of revolutionary change produces such extremes of euphoria, despair, greed, fear, hope, and anxiety that not just individuals but whole social movements simply go mad. One begins to understand a little of what life in the overheated cockpits of Paris and St. Petersburg must have been like, with absolutely everything up for grabs, with no limit to what one could win or lose, where obscure radicals preaching the gospel of the Goddess of Reason or the need for the ten-hour clock, can gain a large audience, where they can, indeed, acquire the ability to decide who shall keep their lands and who shall live.

But what, in any case, is normality in a society where scores of blacks can be shot down in the street by other blacks and no one even dreams of apprehending their killers? Where Eugene Terreblanche can appear on TV and boast that the AWB's raid into

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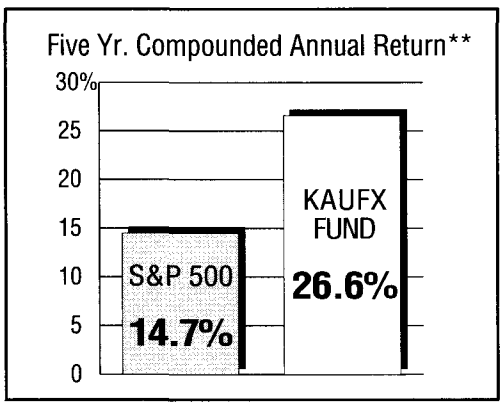

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Bophuthatswana was a "victory" because his men killed a hundred innocent people, and no one even suggests that he should be arrested for murder? Where men with Kalashnikovs board commuter trains shouting "*Bulala aba thakathi!*" (Kill the witches!) and then proceed to hurl any "witches" they find off the moving train? Where a clearly disturbed woman with a criminal record for kidnapping and assault (Winnie Mandela) can be elected head of her party's women's section, an MP, and, perhaps, to the cabinet? Where Afrikaner conservatives insist, under threat of war, on a *volkstaat* but cannot for the life of them tell you where they want it to be?

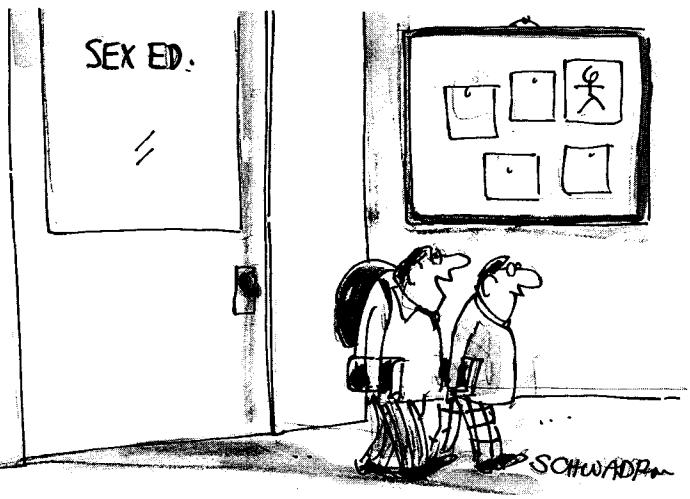
How Big the ANC Victory?

BUT ALL this is mere prolegomenon to the foregone conclusion of the election. "But will it," I am asked all the time, "be really free and fair?" The answer to this is no, not really, but it doesn't matter as much as one might have expected. The various polls differ only in whether they show the ANC getting a two-thirds majority or not; nobody puts them under 60 per cent. The polls among blacks also show that 49 per cent live in one-party areas; that 28 per cent believe their neighbors will know how they vote; that 24 per cent believe "the community will be hard on a person who disagrees politically with it"; that 20 per cent report pressure on them to vote for a party they don't support; that 18 per cent say one particular political group physically controls the areas they live in and is trying to ensure that people vote the way it wants.

When asked which groups were doing this, blacks mentioned the ANC in eight out of the nine regions, the AWB in four, the National Party in three, and Inkatha in two. More than half of all blacks intending to vote for the ANC lived in one-party areas, and 58 per cent named the ANC (as against 14 per cent who named Inkatha) as the party using its local control to "make sure people vote for them whether they want to or not." This does not mean that the ANC is worse than Inkatha in this respect, merely that it controls more territory.

Such pressures appear to have been particularly strong in the great Xhosa heartland of the Eastern Cape and Transkei, whence so many of the ANC leaders originate: the ANC is relying on this "home base" to deliver a vast bloc vote. In this region no less than 81 per cent of blacks said the ANC was using its local control to enforce the vote it wants, though pollsters found similarly high figures reporting such pressures in the Eastern Transvaal (75 per cent), the Northern Transvaal (64), and the sparsely populated Northern Cape (83). In Natal 39 per cent of blacks accused Inkatha (and 38 per cent the ANC) of exerting similar pressures.

Such figures suggest that many blacks will be casting their votes in a manner which is some way short of free and fair. They also tell one the important truth that the vast numbers of international election monitors will make no dent at all in the problem by patrolling the polling booths on election day, for the damage has been done over the months and years before. Suppose that some township "comrades" necklaced one of your neighbors back in 1988 and that they are now telling you in no uncertain terms how they want you to vote. Since then you have been through more "mass action" stayaways—enforced by teenage gasoline bombers at the bus stops—than you can easily remember. It's impossible to put a face or even a date on such intimidation; it has long ago become structural to the way you live.



"So that's *how Hugh Hefner got so rich!"*

But since it is politically unthinkable for the election not to be declared free and fair, whatever the truth, free and fair it will be pronounced to be. And in a way that will be right. The ANC, undoubtedly the most popular party, will win; the NP, the second most popular party, will come second; and so on. In a rough and ready way the results will correspond to the crude realities on the ground. The only real disaster will be if the combination of the Inkatha Freedom Party's boycott and the ANC's territorial pressure on voters produces a two-thirds majority for the ANC, enabling it to write its own constitution and govern without power-sharing. That in turn would empower all the most radical elements within the ANC, which would panic the non-black minorities and set a whole series of dominoes falling in several directions at once. Oddly, what on the face of it might seem a result able to create a massive and authoritative stability would then have quite the opposite effect.

The ANC will sweep inexorably to victory in seven of the nine provinces. If the election goes ahead in Natal it will, given Inkatha's boycott, also win easily there, but it is hard to say exactly what such a victory would mean. From the outset of "free" politics in 1990, the ANC has, with some success, sought to marginalize Buthelezi and the IFP. For over a year after Mandela's emergence from captivity the two men failed to meet, essentially because Mandela (who was keen to meet) felt unable at that stage to ignore the ferocious pressures emanating from his own hard-liners. By mid 1990 the ANC had begun mass action intended to "crush KwaZulu"; as a direct result, IFP–ANC fighting erupted on the Reef, the area around Johannesburg. Then the Zulu king's demand for a seat at the constitutional talks was turned down and Buthelezi refused even to grace the talks with his presence. Buthelezi, always sensitive to real and imagined slights, clearly decided at a very early stage that the constitution was being made without him and against him. In effect his boycott of the election is a declaration that he will deny the legitimacy of

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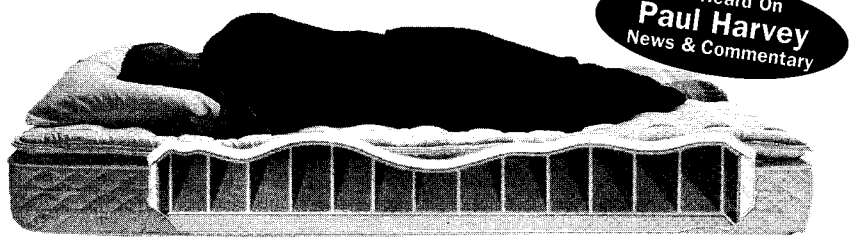
both the new central government and the new provincial government of Natal. Most ANC activists are committed to the view that once Buthelezi is deprived of state patronage in his little KwaZulu fiefdom, his house of cards will collapse.

In the wake of the failed summit between Mandela and Buthelezi, the ANC seems to be aiming at using its power in government to crush Buthelezi once and for all. Elsewhere in Africa we have seen other nationalists, similarly imbued with a modernizing radicalism, set out to crush the traditional aristocracy of an opposing group. The results are seldom happy; usually they lead to prolonged ethnic strife. The ANC has finally realized that this is what it too may now face, but it is far too late for a deal now. Yet all this was avoidable. Nowhere else in the world has a state as large and complex as South Africa even attempted democracy without federalism, but the notion was rejected by the ANC on purely ideological grounds and without serious consideration. Over the medium—let alone long—term, a high price will surely be paid for this.

The one province the ANC seems certain to lose is the Western Cape, where the last opinion polls put de Klerk's National Party ahead by 52 to 35, thanks to a large NP advantage among the Coloureds, who make up 55 per cent of the province's population. This alone will demonstrate with uncomfortable clarity how racially polarized the election is and how signally unsuccessful multiracialism has been as an election theme. Early in the campaign a secret poll for the ANC led its American advisors to warn the party that its only hope of winning the Western Cape was by ditching its local leader, the ex-Reverend Allan Boesak, whose "morally ambiguous lifestyle" was a major drawback among conservative and religious Coloured voters. Boesak—South Africa's own Jesse Jackson—now claims that he did indeed offer his resignation to Mandela and that he longs only to "get back into the pulpit." Asked whether, instead of denying reports of his various extramarital peccadilloes and then having to admit they were true, he might have done better to make a clean breast of things right away, he replied: "Naturally, that was a course of action I considered. But that would



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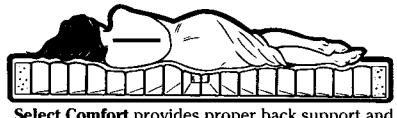

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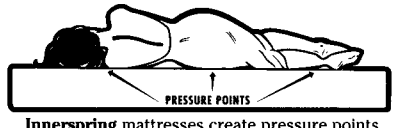

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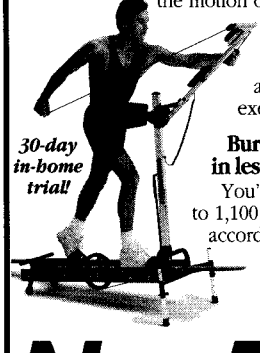

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have been the easy way out. I needed to know the loneliness of guilt." He already sounds close to conceding defeat, but the ANC has been drafting in high-profile Coloureds and Mrs. Desmond Tutu in a frantic effort to close the gap.

One of the most important moments in the campaign came when Alec Erwin, one of the white Communists on the ANC list, announced that there "was nothing sacrosanct" about the budget-deficit limit of 6 per cent of GDP, to which the ANC had committed itself in accepting the recent IMF loan. More or less simultaneously, Trevor Manuel, the ANC's probable finance minister, announced that the IMF and World Bank "are begging to lend us money, but we're saying, Wait a minute, not yet." This coincided with the appointment to a top ANC economics job of Ben Turok, another white Communist, best known for his denunciation of the Bank and the Fund for "attempting to install bourgeois democracy and so-called free markets in the Third World."

Now, South Africa is, in Third World terms, a prudent and underborrowed country. It has been widely assumed that the ANC's ambitious spending plans—millions of houses to be built, ten years of universal free education, affordable health care for all, even affordable telephones for all—would require large-scale Fund and Bank financing, for no one takes seriously the party's claim that it can finance all its plans out of savings derived from post-apartheid efficiency. With domestic savings only just enough to finance depreciation of capital plant, either the new government will have to borrow more or it will have to print more money.

Amazingly, in the present atmosphere such disputes seem like mere quibbles. At the moment all men of goodwill simply take it for granted that the redistribution of wealth is a necessary and good thing. First, however, we have to go through the terrible birth pains of bringing the new society into life. One longs to get it over so that small questions such as whether one should simply print more money, or borrow it, can get some consideration; so that, in a word, real politics can at last begin. □

The Clinton Plan

LOW-RENT HEALTH

Rent control depresses not only the cost, but also the quality, of housing. Get ready for health control.

BRUCE BARTLETT

ALTHOUGH universal access has been the Clinton Administration's main selling point for its health-care proposal, it is clear that the driving force behind it is a desire to rein in medical cost inflation. This inflation, President Clinton told the nation on September 22, "is eating away at our wages, our savings, our investment capital, our ability to create new jobs in the private sector and this Public Treasury."

Indeed, over the last decade, while the overall Consumer Price Index has risen about 45 per cent, the price of medical care has more than doubled. Although the rate of increase in medical prices has slowed in recent years, they are still rising much more rapidly than other prices.

President Clinton's solution to this problem is, in effect, price controls. Under the Clinton Plan a National Health Board decides each year how much the nation as a whole will spend on health care. If medical costs exceed this global budget, payments to doctors, nurses, and hospitals are reduced accordingly. Although the Administration denies that this procedure constitutes price control, a group of 562 economists recently wrote to President Clinton saying that the plan imposes price controls, and that such controls have never worked.

The economists' letter, however, errs by comparing controls on medical costs with general wage and price controls, such as those imposed by President Nixon in 1971 or by President Roosevelt during World War II. Those controls were designed to deal with a general rise in the price level resulting from loose monetary and fiscal policies. Since the controls did nothing to attack the underlying source of the inflationary pressure, they could not be maintained for long. After the controls were withdrawn, the price level simply caught up with where it would have been without them.

But this is a false analogy, because Clinton is not proposing to control all wages and prices in response to a general price inflation. Instead, he is proposing to control prices in only one segment of the economy while other prices will continue to adjust freely. In this respect, the Clinton plan is much more like rent control.

Rent controls were first imposed during World War II as part of the overall wage-and-price-control program. However, when all other prices were freed following the war, some places, like New York City, retained the controls on rents. These controls have been broadened and extended ever since. Thus we have had half a century of experience with such controls.

The main thing that economists have found from their studies of rent controls is that over time the housing stock deteriorates. Landlords, who now receive a below-market rate of return on their investment, cut back on operating and maintenance expenses. New investment in housing falls, and in some cases landlords simply abandon their properties. In the end, the quality of the housing stock falls to a level consistent with the level of fixed rent payments.

However, since rent payments are low relative to income, tenants are able to afford better-quality housing than they otherwise would. Consequently, tenants are often willing to make up-front payments to landlords,

Mr. Bartlett, a senior fellow with the Alexis de Tocqueville Institution, was deputy assistant secretary of the treasury for economic policy from 1988 to 1993.

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called "key money," in order to obtain a rent-controlled apartment.

Landlords not only solicit such under-the-table payments for controlled apartments, they also become highly selective about whom they rent to. Middle-aged, middle-class tenants, who are unlikely to have small children or run down the property, will be favored over younger or poorer tenants. Thus rent control tends to help those who need it least, while hurting those it would most benefit.

In some localities, apartments are freed of controls after a vacancy, and controls do not apply to newly constructed units. However, the fact that other units are still rent-controlled makes rents on uncontrolled units higher than they would otherwise be, since tenants in controlled apartments tend to purchase more housing than they would in the absence of controls, thus constricting the overall availability of housing. Also, landlords fear the extension of controls to uncontrolled units and demand higher payments to compensate them for this risk. Thus rent control actually leads to *higher* rents for many people.

Despite all this, rent controls once imposed are extremely difficult to remove, since doing so would involve a massive redistribution of income from renters to landlords. Also, those in the middle class, who mainly benefit from controls, exercise strong political power, while those who mainly suffer are those without political clout, such as landords, the young, and the poor.

Thus the downward spiral continues. The Swedish economist Assar Lindbeck probably spoke for most economists when he said that "next to bombing, rent control seems to be the most efficient technique so far known for destroying cities, as the housing situation in New York demonstrates."

The Same for Health

SO WHAT does this tell us about the effects of medical price controls? First, it is probably safe to assume that the overall quality of health care will decline over time. If returns on investments in health care decline relative to returns on other investments, then resources will shift out of health care, leading to a decline in the capital stock. This includes not only investment in tangible assets, such as hospitals and medical equipment, but also investments in human capital (e.g., medical training) and research and development.

Young people seeking a career will think twice before entering the health-care field. Those already in the field will be less inclined to invest in additional training to become specialists and will probably cut back on hours worked and retire early. Companies will be reluctant to invest in research for new drugs, equipment, and techniques. The result inevitably will be a decline in both the quantity and quality of medical services.

The decline, however, will be gradual, because there is already a large stock of medical capital. Thus, the ultimate effects may not be visible for decades. However, by the time the deterioration becomes apparent, the gap between what people are paying for medical care and what it would cost in a free market will be politically intolerable. Thus the deterioration will continue.

The benefits of medical price controls will accrue mainly to those who least need them—people in the middle class in relatively good health to begin with. Since the demand for medical services will outstrip supply, some form of rationing must occur. When hospitals are faced with too many patients for available beds, those with the least costly ailments will probably be taken first. This means that the elderly, those with chronic conditions, and the poor will be squeezed out.

If the history of rent control teaches us anything, it is that the best way to avoid the problems associated with it is not to adopt it in the first place. The deterioration in quality is inevitable, but too gradual to create a crisis. Those who suffer most are the politically weak, and so there is little incentive for politicians to fix the problem. In the end, even when everyone recognizes that the system is not working, the cost of undoing the damage is too great. Thus the only real solution is not to adopt controls in the first place. □

The Achtenberg File

ROBERTA ON A RAMPAGE

On social issues, the Clintonites aren't New Democrats, they're radicals. A case in point.

RICH LOWRY

BY 1984 it had become clear that San Francisco's bathhouses were a deadly venue for spreading AIDS. In October the city's public-health director, Mervyn Silverman, ordered 14 of the bathhouses closed over the objections of some gay leaders—including the lesbian lawyer and activist Roberta Achtenberg.

The bathhouses "are a sex positive environment where they [closeted gays] feel like human beings instead of being in the bushes," Miss Achtenberg told the *Seattle Times*. "They are institutions of tremendous symbolic significance to a sexual minority." As one of a group called Bay Area Lawyers for Individual Freedom she fought the city's order in court. "We are primarily interested in the civil-rights issues here," she explained.

Her efforts would ultimately fail. Silverman's order was the death knell for bathhouses (although the last didn't close until 1987)—fortunately for gays more concerned about their lives than their "rights."

In 1993, after a bitter battle, Miss Achtenberg was confirmed as Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, making her the highest-ranking openly lesbian official ever. But the real story isn't her sexuality but her world view: as the bathhouse case

Mr. Lowry is NR*'s associate articles editor.*

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shows, her idea of civil rights is so abstract and far-reaching and her gay politics so myopic that she can in good conscience trample even the real interests of gays (let alone those of Boy Scouts or mortgage lenders).

Making of a Radical

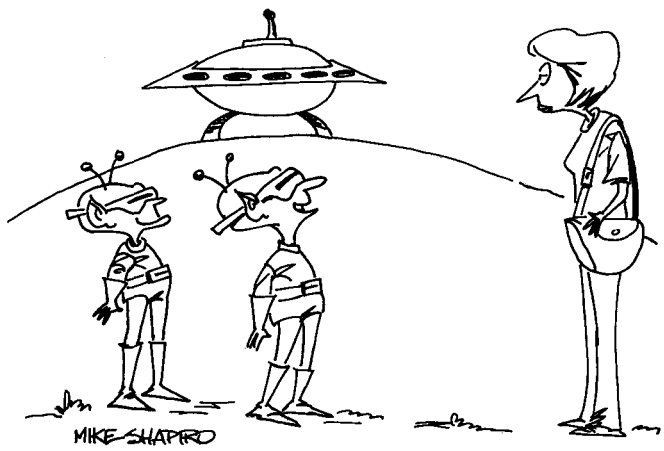
FOR Roberta Achtenberg, a social conscience came early. Raised in Los Angeles, she remembers as a seven-year-old refusing to enter a restaurant with a picket-line outside. She went on to study history at Social Conscience Central, UC Berkeley, where she participated in anti-war protests and spent her senior year working as a legal intern on welfare-rights cases (and still graduated Phi Beta Kappa). She decided to become a lawyer "because I thought it was a way of doing social justice."

But her career took an unexpected twist in Salt Lake City. She was there at the University of Utah taking her law degree, 25 years old and married, when she realized she was a lesbian. She left her husband and moved to the Bay Area, where her life's work would become defending what she calls "the new family."

What's that? Take her own case. She has a partner, former San Francisco Municipal Court judge Mary Morgan (she resigned to join Miss Achtenberg in Washington), who bore the couple a son, Benjamin, through artificial insemination in 1985. They are not alone: the country is in the midst of a "lesbian baby boom." By one estimate there are 5,000 gay households with children in the Bay Area alone.

Miss Achtenberg is adamant about the equivalency—moral and legal—of these families with straight ones: "We are building our *own* tradition of family," she told a 1985 San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Day rally, "for which we demand recognition and respect. We are entitled to love and to protect our partners, to keep the children we have, to have the children we want, to teach and counsel the children of others, and to stand up against anyone who tries to take these cherished rights away from us."

When Miss Achtenberg joined the Lesbian Rights Project (LRP) in 1982, she undertook to get the courts to buy her vision. For the most part it was a tough sell, with courts reluctant to ignore homosexuality in custody decisions or to recognize gays as parents of their partners' children. But the LRP became a lesbian-rights clearinghouse—publishing a widely circulated *Lesbian Mother Litigation Manual*—and by 1987 Miss Achtenberg could tell the *National Law Journal* that gay families were making legal inroads, especially in urban areas. In 1989 she won the right of a lesbian couple to adopt a child.



"We're in search of universal health coverage."

And all the lost suits didn't really matter because Miss Achtenberg was engaged in politics as much as law. She credits, for instance, a losing 1982 suit to get California to extend dental benefits to a gay man's partner with creating a "revolution in consciousness" about the existence of stable gay families.

She hit political pay-dirt on the issue in 1989 when she was appointed to head Mayor Art Agnos's Task Force on Family Policy. The task force argued that the "recognition of domestic partnership is the only way to treat [gay] relationships with the equal dignity to which they are entitled." Its June 1990 report—featuring epigraphs from Thomas Jefferson and Harvey Milk both—recommended extending health insurance, family and bereavement leave, and retirement benefits to the domestic partners of city employees. Then, says former Mayor Agnos, Miss Achtenberg was key "in the formulation of a legislative strategy" to enact the reports' proposals. By 1992 San Francisco's domestic partner policies were arguably the most liberal in the nation.

To be sure, not everyone views that as a recommendation. Equal status for gay families is part of what Frank S. Zepezauer, who tracks such issues for the Men's Defense Association, calls an assault on the "legitimacy principle"—the normative notion that families have mothers and fathers. Furthermore, there is credible research to support the common-sense conclusion that, all things being equal, a child will be better off with heterosexual than homosexual parents. "In our society you're under all kinds of pressure as a homosexual," says Brigham Young University family-sciences professor Craig Peery. "There's lots of data that kids pick all that up."

Almost anywhere else in America Miss Achtenberg's record would have ruled out a political career. Not in San Francisco, a one-party, one-ideology city that stresses symbolic issues (a sort of perpetual College Republican convention for the Left). She had a base among gays, and an easy time reaching out to civil-rights and environmental groups; she thrived.

Bigger Things

HER FIRST plunge came in 1988 against the establishment Democrat John Burton, a former congressman, for a seat in the state assembly. Miss Achtenberg ran on the "new politics," but in old ways. First, she said it would be "inappropriate" to bring up Burton's troubles with drugs and alcohol—then made them a campaign issue by saying *she* didn't have a record of absenteeism or letting people down. "Those are significant differences," she told the *Chronicle*, "that I think are more important than whether or not it appears as if John and I have the same position on issues." Second, she hammered Burton for taking special-interest money—then bagged feminist and gay PAC money of her own. "Those are what I call *legitimate* special interest groups [my emphasis]," she explained.

Though the underdog, she ran a

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strong race. "She shocked a lot of people coming from nowhere," says Agnos (who, incidentally, has landed his own job with HUD). That, and her work on the high-profile family task force, helped pave the way for her successful run for the Board of Supervisors in 1990. There, she built a reputation as a sober and thoughtful policy-maker. "She's not a schmoozer," says Larry Bush, publisher of the newsletter *City-Report*. "She talks like she's giving you a legal brief." Political allies consider Miss Achtenberg a consensus-builder, but in San Francisco that has a meaning of its own: just ask the Bay Area Boy Scouts.

There were rumblings of the controversy that would dominate her confirmation hearings as early as 1988. As co-chair of United Way's gay-issues task force, Miss Achtenberg pushed unsuccessfully for adoption of a gay affirmative-action plan and talked, referring to the Scouts, of "holding the money in the left hand and wagging the finger with the right." By 1992 the Boy Scouts hadn't complied with a United Way gay anti-discrimination clause, and Miss Achtenberg was part of a unanimous board vote to pull its funding. When the Bank of America later backed off from a similar commitment to defund the Scouts, Supervisor Achtenberg sponsored a resolution—vetoed by Mayor Frank Jordan—urging the city to divest $6 million from accounts there.

For Miss Achtenberg most of this was just fun politics—the Bank of America action had no meaning, because the accounts in question were set to be opened up for bidding anyway. (Said one City Hall insider at the time: "She had a meeting with them [Bank of America] and asked them to give up something that wouldn't hurt her or them but look like she fixed it. . . . [I]nstead it became a divisive issue.") But for the Scouts the backlash—including a School Board vote to bar them from San Francisco schools, which Scout officials believe Miss Achtenberg had a hand in—had real consequences. Bay Area Scouting official Kenneth Allen says the Scouts have had to scramble to raise the missing $400,000 a year in funding—"no small chunk of change." And a program that had served thousands of inner-city kids in San Francisco is dead, thanks to the school ban.

No one outside the Bay Area would have heard any of this had Miss Achtenberg not met with Bill Clinton in January of 1992. At first skeptical of him—"a little too moderate for me"—she was won over at that meeting. Most gay activists would fall for Clinton after his impassioned West Hollywood speech supporting gay rights in May. The gay community raised about $5 million for Clinton in 1992, and the Human Rights Campaign Fund had ten thousand gays and lesbians canvassing for him around the country. When Clinton won, it was pay-back time.

Not Just Talk

NOW, what does Roberta Achtenberg mean for HUD? For one: action. Says an admiring former aide: "Where there's injustice, Roberta will show up." Whereas liberal fair-housing groups at first worried about her lack of experience, they now see an energetic ally. "On the whole," says National Fair Housing Alliance executive director Shanna Smith, "[HUD's fair housing] staff just needed someone with Roberta's leadership."

For anyone doing business connected to housing this means trouble. Fair housing doesn't mean just desegregation any more; it means rooting out the "systemic" discrimination of routine business practices that have a "disparate impact." Here Miss Achtenberg's keen sense of "civil rights" as now interpreted, is indispensable—because the "racism" she'll be rooting out is subtle indeed.

Fair housing, HUD maintains, depends on both fair lending and fair insuring—and Miss Achtenberg has promised to form special "units" to promote both. An indication of her approach to these issues came in a tussle over an interagency statement on fair lending released in March. The Achtenberg-backed version would have had language about advertising, marketing, and branching decisions that went beyond equal access to something approaching affirmative action (e.g., requiring banks to locate branches in heavily minority areas). "It was really pushing the envelope," says Karen Thomas, the regulatory counsel for the Independent Bankers Association of America.

The traditional banking agencies—like the Fed—quashed HUD's version. But for the banking industry it signals the entry of an aggressive new player on the scene. "This is already a very heavily regulated industry, and there's no need for one more regulator," says one insider. And bankers worry about what HUD might do on its own—like its recent proposal (as reported in the *American Banker*) that banks agree to set specific lending and hiring targets. (This amounts to lending by quota, which would essentially mandate risky loans.) Banks won't sign off on that. But Miss Achtenberg is in the process of formulating new lending regulations for Fair Housing Act compliance over which banks won't have a veto.

The insurance industry too is bracing for the Achtenberg Crusade. "[There is an] incredible impediment to economic empowerment that is insurance redlining and race-based discrimination, which is all too pervasive in the insurance industry," she told a seminar sponsored by the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now. "It is time . . . to recognize that so many of these practices, though not motivated by discriminatory intent necessarily, have had a discriminatory and detrimental destructive effect."

HUD is entering new terrain in regulating the insurance industry—in fact, insurers contend HUD doesn't even have the authority—and a serious effort is probably a couple of years away. But Miss Achtenberg is sounding an ominous note, because insurance is an inherently discriminatory business—property in high-crime, high-arson areas (inner cities) is at higher risk and demands higher premiums. "We have to look at risk," says Charles Fritzel of the National Association of Independent Insurers. "That seems to be a problem for them. They seem to want to throw out risk-based pricing." Eradicating the "discriminatory effect" of high-risk premiums would mean "cross-subsidies"—everyone in lower-risk areas paying higher premiums.

While the insurance and banking industries wait for the New Roberta Order, for HUD employees it has already arrived. In a January 13 memo Miss Achtenberg outlined HUD's new performance standards with regard to diversity, which includes, of course, "sexual orientation." In order for supervisors to get an outstanding rating

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on the "Cultural Diversity Critical Element" there must be "documented evidence" showing how a manager or supervisor "has materially contributed to the achievement of the Department's Affirmative Employment Program goals and its Diversity Vision."

Then comes a long list of examples of how to comply: "speaks favorably about minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and others of diverse backgrounds"; "participates as an active member of minority, feminist, or other cultural organizations"; "provides leadership and initiative for agency-wide EEO/Cultural Diversity programs"; "volunteers as a mentor to help install [*sic*] the value of diversity . . . in those mentees who want to excel in helping the Department adhere to its mission."

This has raised eyebrows on the Hill. "It's totally outrageous," says one Republican staffer. "The basic rule," explains Michael Greve of the Center for Individual Rights, "is government must not condition benefits, like promotion, on people's willingness to engage in certain speech or activities." In response to complaints, HUD has said it "intend[s] to review" the guidelines.

Post-Bork confirmation battles almost necessarily have an element of parody. So it is that the image that emerged from Miss Achtenberg's hearings was "Roberta the Boy-Scout Basher." There's truth to that, but it misses much. Roberta Achtenberg is not the Abbie Hoffman of lesbians—just a flamboyant activist. She can work effectively to get where her conscience tells her to go. That's the problem. □

A Case of Statisticitis

MEDICAL MALPRACTICE

Feeling feverish, headachy? You may be coming down with the latest illness: gun ownership.

J. NEIL SCHULMAN

ANYBODY WHO has studied the stock market knows that when women's hemlines go up, the prices of stocks go up also, but no one is foolish enough to claim that by shortening skirts we can cause a stock-market boom. That sort of common sense, however, doesn't seem to hold when the subject is the so-called epidemiology of "gun violence."

The point at issue is the contention that medical researchers can study firearms-related violence as a matter of epidemiology apart from the motives of the people who pull the trigger—which is the proper study of that branch of sociology known as criminology. By this premise alone, epidemiologists deny the fundamental difference between microbic cultures and human cultures: microbes don't act on their value-judgments; people do.

The latest outbreak of statisticitis emerges from a study led by Arthur L. Kellermann, MD, published in the October 7, 1993, issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, and financed by the Centers for Disease Control. A previous Kellermann-led study, published in the June 12, 1986, *NEJM* and also financed by the CDC, gave us the factoid that you are 43 times as likely to die from a handgun kept in the home—through homicide, suicide, or accident—as you are to kill a burglar with it.* By the time this factoid turned into mega-soundbite of gun-control advocates in the media and Congress, you were supposedly 43 times as likely to die from a handgun kept in the home as to *protect* yourself from a burglar with it.

Dr. Kellermann himself cautioned against that conclusion, saying, "Morality studies such as ours do not include cases in which burglars or intruders are wounded or frightened away by the use or display of a firearm. Cases in which would-be intruders may have purposely avoided a house known to be armed are also not identified. We did not report the total number of nonlethal firearm injuries involving guns kept in the home. A complete determination of firearm risks versus benefits would require that these figures be known."

On Thin Ice

KELLERMANN'S latest "population-based case-control study" of homicides throws such caution to the winds. He attempts to quantify "firearms risks versus benefits" by comparing households where a homicide occurred with households where no homicide occurred—in three counties, chosen for the convenience of their location to the researchers. After correcting for several other risk factors such as use of alcohol or illicit drugs, previous domestic violence, and previous criminal records in the 316 matched households ultimately compared, Kellermann determined that households where "homicide at the hands of a family member or intimate acquaintance" occurred were almost three times as likely to have kept a loaded handgun in the home as control households where such a homicide did not occur. From this determination Kellermann concludes, "Although firearms are often kept in the home for personal protection, this study shows that the practice is counterproductive. Our data indicate that keeping a gun in the home is independently associated with an increase in the risk of homicide in the home."

An immediate technical problem with Kellermann's methods was raised by David N. Cowen, PhD, in a letter to

Mr. Schulman is a Los Angeles novelist, screenwriter, and journalist. This article is excerpted form his book Stopping Power: Why 70 Million Americans Own Guns, *just out from Synapse–Centurion.*

*Of those 43 deaths 37 were suicide; eliminating suicide immediately drops the claimed figure to 6 times as likely. We can eliminate suicide from our analysis of gun-effects immediately. *The American Journal of Psychiatry* (March 1990) reported in a study by Rich, Young, Fowler, Wagner, and Black that gun-suicides, which were statistically reduced in the five years following Canada's imposition of handgun restrictions in 1976, were replaced 100 per cent by suicides using other methods, mostly jumping off bridges.

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the *NEJM*. Dr. Cowen charged that Kellermann grouped socially dysfunctional people—for example, the chronically unemployable—with normal people, and thus *any* other risk factors would be inseparable.

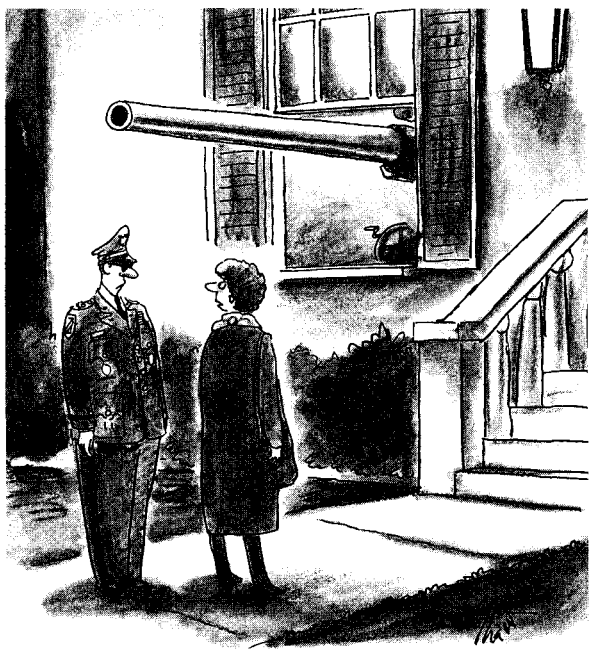
Another problem is that by performing a case study of households with homicide victims, Kellermann is looking at almost twice as many black households as white, and only a handful of Asian households—far too few to be statistically useful. African-Americans are far more likely to be homicide victims than other racial or ethnic groups. Thus studying homicide within the African-American culture may not produce conclusions that can be generalized to other racial or ethnic groups. According to Don Kates, a criminologist with the Pacific Research Institute, "African-Americans have greater death rates than other population groups for drowning, other accidents, and diseases." Other sociological studies note crude differences between African-Americans and Asian-Americans in divorce rates, school-dropout rates, proportion of households from which the father is absent, and so forth.

A more basic problem with Kellermann's conclusion is that it attempts to draw a reverse implication from a set of facts. Let me explain the general point: It will be true that people who own parachutes will die more frequently in falls from airplanes than people who don't. But does that mean that parachute-ownership constitutes an increased risk factor for death by falling from an airplane? Wouldn't logic tell us that the risk of dying is greater for people who fall from airplanes but *don't* have a parachute?

Dr. Kellermann tells us, "We found no evidence of a protective benefit from gun ownership in any subgroup, including one restricted to cases of homicide that followed forced entry into the home and another restricted to cases in which resistance was attempted."

This is where Kellermann's study is completely disingenuous, and indicates—as does his financing and publication by gun-control zealots James Mercy at the Centers for Disease Control and Jerome P. Kassirer, editor of *The New England Journal of Medicine*—that the intent of these studies is to produce soundbites for Sarah Brady rather than science.

Dr. Kellermann is studying only cases where a handgun *failed* to save the victim's life. We're being shown only the *murder victims*, not the successful resisters. Kellermann didn't even document whether a firearm used in a homicide was the homeowner's or the intruder's. And he still doesn't raise the points he himself said would be necessary for "a complete determination of firearms risks versus benefits": "cases in which burglars or intruders are wounded or frightened away by the use or display of a firearm. . . . Cases in which would-be intruders may have purposely avoided a house known to be armed."



"You know *I don't like having a gun in the house."*

Dr. Kellermann can't study such questions because these are the proper focus not of doctors, but of criminologists. And when we shift from the medical paradigm of "gun violence" as a health issue, to the criminological paradigm of "offenders and victims," we get a completely different vision.

Immediately we discover that the cases in which Kellermann perceives an increased risk factor—what he terms "homicide at the hands of a family member or intimate acquaintance"—are only around 10 per cent of the yearly homicides. This is according to both the FBI's *Crime in the United States*, 1992, and *Murder Analysis*, 1992, by the Detective Division of the Chicago Police. Most murders do not take place in the home to begin with. In the Chicago study, only 36.8 per cent of the homicides occurred in or around the home—and that includes public housing, where hallway drug-dealer shootouts are common. Dr. Kellermann himself tells us that in the three counties in which his study was conducted, only 23.9 per cent of homocides took place in the home of the victim. Then, driving home his study's limited scope, he also tells us: "Guns were not significantly linked to an increased risk of homicide by [non-intimate] acquaintances, unidentified intruders, or strangers."

What this adds up to is that you are unlikely to be murdered at home by an intimate; that you are still less likely to be murdered at home by a stranger (not surprising, since homes usually have locks to keep strangers out); but that the great majority of the few murders that *do* take place at home are at the hands of those who have a key. The caution here might well be that if you live with someone who you fear might murder you, you might want to move out if he also keeps a loaded handgun. Or, if the loaded handgun is yours, you might want to keep it somewhere where you can get to it faster than he can. This advice does not become more useful if we call it medical advice.

The answer which Kellermann says we need to discover—the overall usefulness of firearms in self-defense—is to be found in the definitive analysis of a dozen studies in the book *Point Blank: Guns and Violence in America* (Aldine de Gruyter, 1991), by Gary Kleck, professor of criminology at Florida State University. Unlike Dr. Kellermann, Professor Kleck has carefully avoided taking funding from advocates in the gun-control debate, and his impeccable liberal credentials—membership in Common Cause and Amnesty International—preclude a presumption of conservative or pro-NRA bias. Kleck's analysis produced an estimate of around 650,000 handgun defenses

(Continues on page 68)

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THE VICE PRESIDENT

WASHINGTON

April 6, 1994

Dear Rusty,

It was great to see you last week, although I wish it had been under slightly more pleasant circumstances. Let me just say again how sorry I am about the subpoena. You were a terrific sport to fly all the way up here from Brazil, interrupting your research, and lugging all my letters up with you was certainly beyond the call of duty.

You'll be happy to know that things are slowly getting back to normal around here—it helps that Bill and HRC have been on vacation for a week—and we've had a chance to get control of the agenda. People aren't talking about Whitewater any more. Now they're talking about how on earth we let this North Korean situation get so bad, and how exactly we're planning to pay for universal health coverage, so as far as I'm concerned, things are back to normal.

When Bill and HRC came back, they were both rested and refreshed. HRC always looks better when she's been away for a few days; she really thrives on the time she's able to spend alone, one-on-one, with Bill. And that's what it was, for a whole solid week in that big house in Coronado, just Bill and HRC and a few Secret Service agents.

Bill, frankly, looked a little pale. And he had lost weight. But that works for him, somehow. The bike riding and the jogging and the Deal-A-Meal plan that HRC put him on had slimmed him down a bit. I saw him on CNN as he flew off to drum up support for the health-care plan, and as he waved goodbye to HRC on the tarmac, I've never seen him look happier. The politician in me thought that it might have been a better picture had he and HRC been leaving together, but as you know, tradition forbids that the President and First Lady fly together on the same plane. Something about the rules of succession.

But they both flew into town yesterday afternoon, and it was like old times. Tip and I went over to the White House last night for an informal dinner, just the four of us. I'll be honest with you, Rusty: I was a little bit nervous about the dinner. The four of us hadn't sat down for a meal together since early last year. And in the intervening months we'd drifted apart. A lot of this was jealousy, of course. HRC never really liked it when I was referred to as a "co-President" by the media. Bill was a little miffed by my reputation as "Mr. Integrity." And lately, things had been a bit tense between Tip and HRC, especially since it was discovered that Tip had the number for the Washington Times on speed-dial.

It turns out I was worried for nothing. The dinner, which was the very first one presented by the new White House chef, went off without a hitch. From the Organic Baby Greens Salad, No Dressing, to the Steamed Whitefish on Spinach, No Sauce, to the No Dessert, the dinner could not have been lovelier.

Something has come over the Clintons. That week away, with no distractions, did wonders for their marriage. They don't snipe at each other the way they used to. He doesn't call her "Evita" any more, and she doesn't call him "Free Willy." He doesn't complain about the diet food she makes him eat, and she doesn't make fun of his jogging shorts. All in all, a healthy improvement. In fact, in the whole two hours it took us to eat dinner, there was only one tense moment. HRC had brought out the new chef, to thank him for the dinner. "And we would like," she announced, "to eat exactly like this in the future. Small portions. No fat. High fiber. And absolutely no red meat."

"So if you've got any money in cattle futures," Bill said, looking up from his plate, "I'd sell."

Tip and I just kind of stared down at our decaf.

As we were putting on our coats to go, Bill and I had a few moments alone. I've known Bill for almost two years and we've gotten pretty close, so I took the liberty of saying something.

"I've got to ask you a question," I said. "What's with you and HRC? You two seem so . . . so . . ."

"So at peace?" Bill asked.

"Exactly."

"Well, Al, I'll tell you. For a whole lot of years, I've been beating myself up for being such a lousy husband, when it comes to . . . you know."

I nodded.

"But in the past two weeks," he continued, "what with Whitewater and Madison and the cattle futures thing, I really feel like me and Hill, well, that we're finally on an equal footing. Know what I mean?"

I nodded.

"So we kind of agreed," he went on, "to each kind of look the other way for a while. It's like that treaty that was signed right before World War II."

"The Hitler–Stalin Non-Aggression Pact?" I asked.

"Exactly."

"But," I said, a little taken aback, "eventually the pact didn't work. Eventually Hitler invaded Russia anyway. Eventually there was a war."

Bill nodded, sadly. "Eventually," he said, "there always is."

All the best, Al

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Combat Ready

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS

THIS extraordinarily important book, following up on the author's *Culture Wars* of 1991, reflects an understandable reluctance to say straight out what some Americans are beginning to suspect is the case: cultural warfare may be on the edge of turning into civil war. That's the meaning of the book's title. The author's ambivalence about that ominous prospect is reflected in the uncertainty about the subtitle. In the advance proofs first provided to this reviewer, the subtitle on the cover was *Searching for Democracy as the Culture Wars Rage*. Inside the cover was a different subtitle: *The Rise of Irreconcilable Differences in American Public Life*. The first subtitle was considerably more hopeful than the second. The book itself replaces "culture wars," plural, with "culture war," singular. That is in keeping with the evidence examined. The lines of warfare are clearly drawn, and there is one war going on, not several. Meanwhile, the second subtitle's accent on the irreconcilable is in keeping with the book's concluding call for a renewal of "substantive democracy," a call issued in tones ever more wan and wistful as the author realizes that the likelihood of its being answered continues to diminish.

Before the Shooting Begins: Searching for Democracy in America's Culture War, by James Davison Hunter (Free Press, 275 pp., $22.95)

James Hunter, professor of sociology and religion at the University of Virginia, wants it understood that, as a scholar, he is "neutral" in the culture war. He stands in the sociological tradition of Max Weber, espousing the virtues of reason, objectivity, and self-restraint. He is appalled by the current academic trashings of that tradition, by the deconstructionisms that reject objectivity and reason and turn all scholarship into no more than an exercise of the "will to power." As much as possible, Mr. Hunter wants to stand above the fray, helping the belligerents to understand the nature of the conflict in which they are embroiled, and urging them toward a discovery of "common ground" by which civil war might be avoided. There is a hint of desperation in Mr. Hunter's urgings. "Before the Shooting Begins" does, after all, suggest that the shooting is about to begin.

Roman Genn

"It's the economy, stupid," should perhaps take the prize as the dumbest political slogan in recent American history. Although he's too much of a gentleman to call anyone stupid, the truth to be derived from Mr. Hunter's work is: "It's the culture, stupid." He does not put it quite this way, but politics is chiefly a function of culture, at the heart of culture is morality, and at the heart of morality is religion. The complicated linkages between politics, culture, morality, and religion are as evident on one side of the culture war as they are on the other. The conflict is often described in terms of the religious versus the secularist, but the secularist is as inescapably religious as his opponent. That is, he too, and however unreflectively, subscribes to a belief system by which he determines what is fair, what is right, what is just.

Mr. Hunter describes culture this way: "Culture is, first and foremost, a normative order by which we comprehend ourselves, others, and the larger world, and through which we order our experience." Everybody lives in a culture, which provides the terms for deciding what is right and what is wrong, what is noble and what is base, what is good and what is evil. Every counter-culture is itself but a rival culture. Our present circumstance in America is one of cultures at war. Some years ago Alasdair MacIntyre wrote in *After Virtue* that, in a society where people cannot engage in reasonable moral reflections, "politics becomes civil war carried on by other means." Mr. Hunter's study raises the question of whether that civil war will now be carried on by means more conventional to civil wars.

There are many issues being contested—abortion, euthanasia, multiculturalism, homosexuality, sex education in the schools, arts funding, crime and punishment, immigration policy, population control, teenage pregnancy, welfare dependency, quota systems, and on and on. All are unavoidably moral questions in that they invoke the "oughts" of life—how we ought to live and what kind of people we ought to be. The argument supported by Mr. Hunter's careful analysis of massive survey data is that these issues are but different fronts in the culture war, singular. And *the* issue around which the opposing forces are arrayed is abortion. Both conceptually and by virtue of the sociological dynamics, the other issues of the culture war are inextricably entangled with the question of abortion. Most politicians wish this were not the case. But Mr. Hunter dispels any illusion that there is some way around the conflict over abortion policy.

For any political strategist with the wit and the nerve for it, Mr. Hunter's

Father Neuhaus is editor-in-chief of First Things: A Journal of Religion and Public Life, *and an* NR *contributing editor.*

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fourth chapter (written with Carl Bowman) is a mother lode of fact and analysis for constructing new and more effective approaches to the abortion question. Building on work previously published in *First Things*, this chapter, titled "The Anatomy of Ambivalence," is a model of sociological sophistication. Examining "the structure of American ambivalence toward abortion," the authors employ six categories: consistently pro-life, privately pro-life, conveniently pro-life, reticent pro-choice, personally opposed pro-choice, and consistently pro-choice. The polls show 33 per cent of Americans are consistently pro-life, believing abortion is morally wrong and the unborn child should be protected throughout pregnancy, while 16 per cent are consistently pro-choice, believing abortion is permissible throughout pregnancy. The 19 per cent who are privately pro-life do not want to be identified with the pro-life position and often identify themselves as neutral; the 14 per cent who are conveniently pro-life believe abortion is wrong but would consider it in their own case or that of someone close to them. The personally opposed pro-choice 8 per cent are pro-choice in politics but pro-life in personal practice, while the reticent pro-choice 7 per cent approve of abortion (at least up to viability) but think too many people are having abortions.

What it comes down to is that 66 per cent of Americans are on the pro-life side of the ledger, while only 31 per cent are on the pro-choice side. The disparity is even more dramatic when one takes into account that the personally opposed pro-choice and reticent pro-choice confess a moral uneasiness about abortion. Put differently, only 16 per cent (the consistently pro-choice) are morally comfortable with and supportive of current abortion law and practice. But can this possibly be true? One immediately thinks of all those polls that suggest there is something like an even split between those who oppose and those who support *Roe* v. *Wade* and subsequent abortion rulings, with most Americans waffling in the middle.

Such polls are not entirely inaccurate. The overlooked factor is that there is a colossal ignorance about existing abortion law. Only one in ten Americans knows what *Roe* mandated. Large numbers think abortion is legal only in the first three months, and then only for reasons of a serious threat to the mother. Fully 43 per cent say they don't know what the law is, but 80 per cent disagree (65 per cent strongly disagree) with the statement that abortion is legal through all nine months of pregnancy. What they know not to be true is, of course, precisely the law according to *Roe*.

There are other findings that violate conventional wisdoms. For instance, women are more pro-life than men. In addition, on abortion and a host of other controverted issues in the culture war, the most important single variable is religion—with, for example, evangelical Protestants and conservative Catholics being dramatically more likely to be pro-life. This finding is not new with Mr. Hunter, but he helpfully refines its significance. Even more important than religious affiliation is religious *participation*. Even Protestants in the liberal old-line churches and Catholics who identify themselves as liberal tend, if they are actively involved in their churches, to be pro-life. It is *involvement* in religion—or, as Mr. Hunter puts it, in "communities of moral conversation"—that is the strongest determinant in how people align themselves on the issues joined in the culture war.

A deeply troubling question: How can it be that, after more than twenty years of public agitation over the most fevered question in American life, the great majority of Americans are colossally ignorant about abortion law and practice? Mr. Hunter addresses that question with searching examinations of media bias, the politicizing of professional associations (e.g., the American Bar Association), and what can most charitably be called the moral corruption of much of the academy.

For perfectly understandable reasons, most people do not want to think about abortion, and that disinclination to think about it plays into the hands of those who are just as happy if people do not know what is happening. In addition—and this is the really insidious factor—most Americans are exceedingly reluctant to impose their "values" on others. Although they are not philosophers, they have internalized the divorce between fact and value. They are practitioners of what Mr. MacIntyre calls "modern emotivism," the doctrine that, at the end of the day, morality is a matter of taste.

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This explains why the term "choice" has been such a remarkable talisman for the pro-abortionists.

The conclusion, however, is that the present situation almost certainly cannot be sustained. Finally, the state cannot be neutral in matters pertaining to the public good, especially when the good is so elementary as human life, and the question so basic as who belongs, and who does not belong, to the protected category called "the public." As Mr. Hunter writes, "To come down on either side of [the abortion question] is to make a statement about who is qualified for inclusion in the human community, and thus who is worthy of our care and protection." There is, it would seem, no way around that. In the *Casey* decision of 1992, the Supreme Court fretted out loud about the moral legitimacy of the Court and why that legitimacy required upholding *Roe*. Mr. Hunter contends that what is at stake is the moral legitimacy of law and, indeed, of this constitutional order. He knows that will sound alarmist, and so he is almost excruciatingly temperate in tone, going to great lengths to offer nuances and qualifications, but the alarm sounds nonetheless.

Many politicians, perhaps most, tend to view the pro-life and pro-choice positions as the extremes, and then try to situate themselves somewhere in the middle. The social realities so lucidly set forth by Mr. Hunter make clear that there is no middle. The activists of the 16 per cent who are consistently pro-choice adopt a hard-line position of don't-give-an-inch. To declare oneself pro-choice is to be politically locked in to the directions of a small, albeit influential, sector of the American elite. As Governor Robert Casey of Pennsylvania and other politicians have brilliantly demonstrated, the pro-life position is much more capacious. To be pro-life means to subscribe to the goal that every unborn child should be protected in law and welcomed in life. How to get to that goal is a matter of prudential judgment about political possibilities. And since the current law is that of an unlimited abortion license, any change is by definition a movement in the pro-life direction. Waiting periods, regulation of abortion clinics, parental consent—these and other measures, for which there is some leeway in the rulings of the Court, already have strong public support.

Before the Shooting Begins is written by a moderate who earnestly urges upon us a moderation of polarized passions in the hope of saving this democratic republic. There is no reason to doubt that he intends to be neutral, but of course he is not. That is to say, he is not neutral in the eyes of those who benefit from public ignorance, who do not want a democratic deliberation of questions that they believe should be settled by the courts, and who are nothing less than terrified by the suggestion that religiously based moral judgment has a legitimate and necessary part in the making of law and public policy. For the rest of us, *Before the Shooting Begins* is a lucid guide to understanding the war in which, like it or not, we are embroiled, and a bountiful source of fact and analysis for prosecuting it more effectively. One of the more effective ways to prosecute it, as James Davison Hunter demonstrates, is winsomely to invite one and all to a civil conversation about how we ought to live together. □

Who's a Bigot?

STANLEY ROTHMAN

ARE most white Americans still racist? Do conservatives oppose social-welfare programs because conservatives are prejudiced against blacks? Is opposition to affirmative action based on a subtle form of racism? Is the American creed of classical economic liberalism merely a white European racist ideology? Most radicals and a good many present-

The Scar of Race, by Paul M. Sniderman and Thomas Piazza (Belknap/Harvard, 212 pp., $18.95)

Mr. Rothman is Mary Huggins Gamble Professor of Government Emeritus at Smith College and director of the Center for the Study of Social and Political Change.

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day liberals would answer yes to several of these questions. However, as Sniderman and Piazza demonstrate in their well-crafted book, the correct answer to all of them is a resounding no.

The authors' analysis is based on five social surveys drawing on relatively large samples. Most of these, such as the General Social Survey, conducted regularly by the National Opinion Research Center, are widely used. However, the authors have also designed a unique study of their own, the Race and Politics Survey, which yields some exciting finds.

These surveys demonstrate that large numbers of white Americans who strongly oppose discrimination, and who favor increased social-welfare expenditures designed to help black Americans, violently oppose what they perceive to be racial quotas. Indeed, the problem of affirmative action, for many whites and blacks, turns on fundamental issues of fairness as defined by the American creed. Thus, attempts to establish affirmative-action programs may increase whites' negative attitude toward blacks. The authors demonstrate this by asking questions in different orders to random segments of their pool of respondents. Half their respondents were first asked their opinions of black Americans (lazy or hard-working, etc.), while the other half were first asked the following:

> In a nearby state, an effort is being made to increase dramatically the number of blacks working in state government. This means that a large number of jobs will be reserved for blacks, even if their scores on merit exams are lower than those of whites who are turned down for the job. Do you favor or oppose this policy?

A large majority of both groups said they oppose this policy. The important point is that those asked the affirmative-action question first produced significantly more negative views about blacks than those who were asked about their images of blacks before being asked this question.

Many Americans do hold negative views of blacks. For example, 53 per cent of white respondents agreed with the statement "Blacks are aggressive or violent." Interestingly, 59 per cent of black respondents agreed. Indeed, black Americans seem more likely than white Americans to hold, or at least to be willing to express, negative views of blacks.

When one asks what fuels these judgments, a major factor seems to be education. At lower levels of education both political liberals and political conservatives accept many negative stereotypes. The number accepting stereotypes drops as educational attainment rises, though more so among liberals than conservatives. Among both groups, there is fairly widespread acceptance of at least a few stereotypes.

The authors maintain (correctly, I would say) that some of these stereotypes have a basis in reality. What proportion of "excessive" stereotyping stems from ethnocentrism and what proportion stems from the traditional American ideology (i.e., to what extent is racism as "American as apple pie")? The authors' answer is unequivocal. The American ideology is liberal in the classical sense: it supports free enterprise, competition, and individual striving. The authors discover no significant correlation between belief in the American creed and negative attitudes toward African-Americans. On the other hand belief in the need for authority and for strengthening law and order shows at least modest correlations with negative images of blacks.

Additional questions test the reality of Americans' supposed belief in fairness by comparing attitudes toward government assistance for black and white workers who are laid off from their jobs. Again the questions were distributed in random order among respondents. In essence liberals respond to this question by treating blacks and whites equally, while professed conservatives show a slight favoritism toward blacks (especially blacks described as hard-working), even though they are less likely than are liberals to approve of government assistance in general. Thus conservatives—often charged with insensitivity to blacks because of a generalized suspicion of government programs—actually seem more likely to favor blacks in those areas in which they consider government action legitimate.

In general, however, whites who perceive blacks as not trying as hard as they might—and there are many such whites—are less likely to support government assistance than those who do not hold this view of blacks. This is the nub of the social-welfare issue. (The belief that blacks are aggressive or violent bears little relation to views on social welfare.) By all the measures upon which the authors rely, however, these people are not bigots, for, when given the choice, they support assistance for those who behave in appropriate ways, whatever their color. The authors wrestle mightily with the definition of bigotry. Are those whites who believe blacks are lazy (34 per cent) bigots? If so, then what of the 39 per cent of blacks who agree with them?

The authors ultimately decide to define bigots as those who apply negative stereotypes to several "outgroups," and indeed they discover a fairly substantial correlation between those who hold many negative stereotypes about blacks and those who hold many negative stereotypes (though different ones) about Jews. Thus defined, the number of bigots, while not insignificant, is by no means a majority of the sample of white Americans studied.

The authors' general conclusion is clear. While there are bigots in the United States, and bigotry may be important in some areas, the great majority of Americans support equal opportunities for blacks. When it comes to social-welfare issues, conservatives are less likely to support large-scale state welfare efforts not because they are racists but because they believe that such efforts are more likely to hurt than to help those in need. However, insofar as conservatives are willing to assist those in need through particular social programs, they are more likely to favor assisting hard-working blacks than hard-working whites. On the other hand, Americans in general do not support a politics based on race, i.e., busing or quotas. Indeed, insistence upon such policies by whites or blacks increases negative attitudes about blacks.

What then is to be done? The authors do not make policy suggestions. They do note that the politics of quotas (along with charges that the Amer-

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ican creed is racist) have raised the temperature of argument about public-policy issues without contributing to the development of solutions. The implication of their book is that, as William Julius Wilson has argued, a politics of social welfare is superior to a politics of race, but it must show results. The community of black Americans must be seen as striving to help itself and making progress if the larger public is to be willing to tax itself to provide further assistance out of any other motive than fear of black violence.

The trouble is (and Sniderman and Piazza do not address this issue) that social-welfare policies are *not* working for a large number of black Americans, despite the expenditure of literally trillions of dollars over the past thirty years. Nor is it clear that it is possible to design politically feasible policies that will work. Limiting ourselves to the politically feasible, we don't know how to restore the black family or reduce the number of children born out of wedlock, especially given the shifts in the wider culture. We do not know how to substantially reduce violence in the inner cities, or how to persuade more young black males to take jobs at McDonald's, as many Mexican-Americans and Vietnamese-Americans are doing. We have not yet succeeded in developing effective training programs for improving technical skills. In fact there are all too many young, poor black males who have never learned to stick to one job, or to report to work every day, or to avoid violent fights, and we don't know how to persuade them to do so. This is all bad enough, but there is worse.

Sniderman and Piazza do not deal with the implications of the increasing anger of the black middle class. Nor do they deal with the newer attacks on the American creed by the supporters of "multiculturalism" and "diversity." These new ideologies have burgeoned since the authors collected most of their data.

There is little reason to doubt, however, that these movements will ultimately have very negative consequences. As Shelby Steele has pointed out, the ultimate result of a society based on notions of victimization and group entitlements is Farrakhan. The attack on the notion of a common, defining American culture will lead not to greater harmony but to increased tension as each "victim" group escalates its rhetoric and demands more and greater entitlements. Whatever its limitations, American culture has been more inclusive than most. In the past it encouraged a variety of groups who had been at each others' throats in Europe to co-exist in relative peace. Today it encourages Tamil and Sinhalese to live peacefully with each other, even as intermarriage rates between Hispanics and non-Hispanics, and between Americans of Asian and Americans of European descent rapidly increase. Adherence to the classic American ideology has been the cement that has held this very diverse society together. Without it, we will create the conditions for a war of all against all in a society that is unable to compete economically against the advanced industrial societies of Europe and Asia. □

Friends to the End

PETER W. RODMAN

AMONG the cultural benefits of the collapse of Soviet Communism has been the cornucopia of secrets flowing out of Soviet and Soviet Bloc archives and coming through the cracks in the crumbling walls. This has yielded its tactical advantages—such as the intelligence windfall (from East German sources, by one report) that put the CIA onto Aldrich Ames, or the North Vietnamese document on U.S. POWs that Stephen Morris unearthed in Moscow—but it has also had strategic value. By this I mean the immeasurable pedagogical benefit of illuminating once and for all some core truths about the Cold War. The cynical collusion of Stalin and Kim Il Sung in launching the Korean War, for example, has already been exposed in Soviet documents. We can thank the Hungarians for the recent revelations concerning Noel Field's interrogation, which confirms Alger Hiss's guilt. A Cold War history project coordinated by the Woodrow Wilson Center at the Smith-

Mr. Rodman, an NR *senior editor, is director of Middle Eastern studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.*

FDR & Stalin: A Not So Grand Alliance, 1943–1945, by Amos Perlmutter (Missouri, 331 pp., $29.95)

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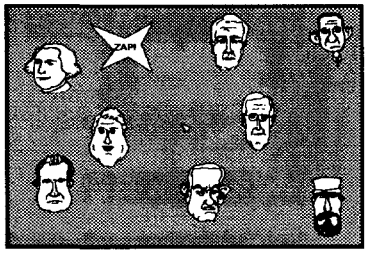

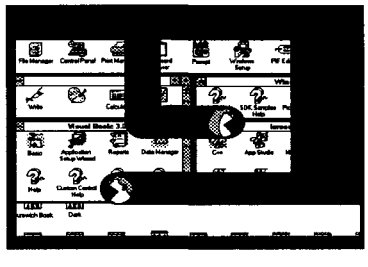

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sonian has produced eye-opening studies of such topics as the Berlin crisis, Sino-Soviet relations, Soviet-Vietnamese relations, and so on.

More broadly, we can thank the general flood of new archival research for the forthright admission by a mainstream liberal historian—John Lewis Gaddis, in the January/February *Foreign Affairs*—that the mounting evidence about Stalin is proving our "revisionists" wrong and our "hardliners" right about which side was responsible for the Cold War. The West's victory would be only a partial victory if our societies did not learn the right lessons from it.

One of the pioneering scholarly efforts in the field is that of Amos Perlmutter, an occasional *NR* contributor, who has discovered in Soviet diplomatic archives a striking new perspective on Franklin Roosevelt's wartime relationship with Stalin. Mr. Perlmutter has accomplished a remarkable feat, as much entrepreneurial as scholarly, in coaxing out of the Russians a fascinating assortment of internal Soviet memoranda and telegraphic reports on the U.S.–Soviet relationship. Mr. Perlmutter's basic conclusion will not be new—that Roosevelt naïvely gambled on Stalin's good will and nearly forfeited the postwar peace—but the documentation is powerful.

The files reveal that the Soviets had their ideological blinders; their characterizations of American "capitalists," "reactionaries," and other political figures are often amusing. But it seems they understood Franklin D. Roosevelt quite well. "It is beyond all question that later on he will be accessible to our influence" wrote their ambassador in Washington, Maksim Litvinov, in June 1943, observing FDR's passionate interest in dismantling the European colonial empires and governing the postwar world by a directorate of the major powers. A month later Litvinov's successor, Andrei Gromyko, reported to Moscow that Harry Hopkins had assured him that in a face-to-face meeting "Roosevelt would surprise Stalin by how far he, Roosevelt, is ready to go to acknowledge our rights, in particular on territorial issues." On pivotal questions that divided the wartime coalition—the opening of a Second Front in the West, the future of Poland, and the division of Germany—Mr. Perlmutter sheds new light on the extent to which FDR was in effect colluding with Stalin to frustrate Churchill.

There are many nuggets here. A clearer picture emerges of Averell Harriman, for example, whose vacillations on Polish independence badly tarnish his conventional image as an early Cold War stalwart. (The *Washington Post* reported some academic accounts in this vein a few months ago, but Mr. Perlmutter had it first.) The Soviets also showed some skill at manipulating American public opinion, as when Wendell Willkie visited Moscow in 1942 and fell easy prey to their effort to recruit him as a champion of an early Second Front.

To Mr. Perlmutter, the Soviet Union's absorption of Eastern Europe was not inevitable, as many of Roosevelt's defenders would have us assume. America's extraordinary economic and military superiority, which only grew as the war progressed, was leverage that Roosevelt utterly failed to use, or even understand, as he clung desperately to the dream of the Soviet Union as a postwar partner. It was a vision that, as Mr. Perlmutter says, was "wrong from the outset, based on an unworkable premise that poisoned any number of political-military decisions throughout the war."

The lessons of history, of course, are not of merely academic interest but inform our present actions. Once again we have an Administration enamored of international organizations as the basis of peace, and preferring conciliation to containment. The threats are different now—Third World renegades, and a Russia that, as it gets back on its feet, does not pose exactly the same kind of threat as its ideologically driven totalitarian predecessor. Nonetheless, Mr. Perlmutter's story of FDR's failure is an illuminating case study of how naïveté and hubris can be an unhealthy combination for the nation on which rests the major responsibility for world leadership. □

FILM

Opera Posthuma

JOHN SIMON

THE GOOD old Eeling comedies look better than ever in retrospect, as we search in vain for the likes of Alec Guinness, Dennis Price, Stanley Holloway, Joan Greenwood, Joyce Grenfell, Glynis Johns, and all the rest. Only Joan Plowright today captures that spirit, but, of course, those movies are no longer being made, which is why British actors such as Gary Oldman and Tim Roth have to learn to make like Americans and appear in our unlikely clinkers in even unlikelier roles.

So I went with, so to speak, great expectations to ***Four Weddings and a Funeral***, "filmed entirely on location in London and the home counties," with only one American in it, and playing, safely, an American. The mere word "wedding" in the title brought back memories of *A Quiet Wedding*, with the still undervalued Margaret Lockwood and a dream supporting cast. Let me tell you right off that *Four Weddings* is not in that league, and not even throwing in that one funeral by way of tragic relief adds much dimension to it.

This is the story of a group of friends seen from the perspective of four weddings and one funeral. The special focus allows the writer, Richard Curtis, to present the characters only as participants in weddings or mourners at a funeral. Such tunnel vision works well on stage in, say, a bedroom farce. On film, as time passes and the scene shifts, and people fall into bed or into their graves, confess secret loves they have been harboring for one another, despair over ever finding proper partners, a lot of emotional baggage accumulates, and the viewer cries out for more information: Who are these people really? What do they do for a living? Only one or two of them seem wealthy enough to do nothing whatsoever.

If the comedy were coruscating throughout, if the dialogue were consistently entrancing, these nagging questions might not obtrude. In the first episode, Charles, our hero, is the best man at a friend's wedding. He and his punker sister and roommate,

Mr. Simon is NR*'s film critic.*

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Scarlett, barely get there on time (it's in one of those home counties), and then he finds he has forgotten the wedding rings. He spots among the wedding quests Carrie, a pretty American, and becomes besotted with her. Out of this, Curtis and his director, Mike Newell, manage to weave a reasonably tangled web, but the quick consummation of Charles and Carrie's infatuation, and her prompt departure for America, leave a peculiar taste in the mouth. The perfunctoriness with which the lovers are thrown together, the manipulativeness with which they are pulled apart, and so back and forth from wedding to funeral to wedding, shrieks contrivance at us a little too loudly.

Surrounding our storybook pair, there are benighted pairs, clumsy pairs, grotesque pairs. There is also a homosexual pair, and Charles has a deaf-mute brother with whom he communicates in sign language. Needless to say, the homosexual lovers display the most touching rapport, and the conversationally challenged brother proves to be the wisest member of the group. At one wedding, Charles is seated with a bunch of his catty former mistresses—could contrivance be more rampant? At another wedding, one member of the group, a newly minted clergyman, officiates, and commits verbal lapses on the order of "Holy Spigot" and "Holy Goat," etc. The comedian Rowan Atkinson does well by the part, but it is strictly a stand-up routine, not genuine comedy. And the film's tone calculatedly veers from the farcical to the poignant, the whole thing as formally straitjacketed as a fugue.

About one-fourth of the jokes—repartee and sight gags—come off. What is lacking is that seeming spontaneity of the best comedies: not being able to smell the scriptwriter behind the laughs. "There's nothing more offputting at a wedding than a priest with an enormous erection" sounds somehow prefabricated to me, as does this piece of folk etymology for "honeymoon": "It's the first time a husband gets to see his wife's bottom." And I'm not sure everyone will relish the reminiscence of one male character about an old school friend: "Head of my house. Buggered me senseless. Still, taught me a lot of things."

The homosexual element is very strong here, and not only in the depiction of the homosexual couple: the flamboyant Gareth (Simon Callow, a bit over the top) and the devoted Matthew (John Hannah, subtle and effective). There is something tendentious about allowing the bereaved Matthew, delivering Gareth's eulogy, the only truly literate dialogue—or monologue—in the film, complete with the reading of a poem by W. H. Auden; nowhere else is there even a passing reference to literature. Moreover, no woman in the film is as lovingly scrutinized as is Hugh Grant (Charles). From the very opening shots, as he wakes up in bed, the camera explores every part of him, leaving no nostril uninvaded. It is he who wears the lightest and most clinging garments, with ampler décolletage than any of the women; it is his former lovers who hover over him; it is he who is the film's chief love object.

It strikes me as a big—but under the circumstances perhaps unsurprising—mistake to have Carrie played by Andie MacDowell, whose feminine appeal is close to nil, and whose acting ability is rather less than that. She comes alive only in the scene where

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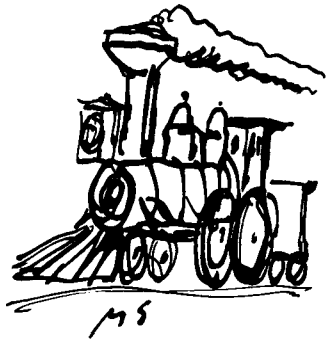
she tries on a number of wedding gowns; there her extensive modeling background briefly makes her look like a pro. The rest of the cast is accomplished, starting with Mr. Grant himself, who is not only a heartthrob (the Rupert Brooke look), but also an actor of intelligence and talent, whose only flaw is his very British, very helter-skelter teeth. Still, they are less troubling than Miss MacDowell's gums, with their equine way of gumming up her smile. There is especially strong support from Kristin Scott Thomas and James Fleet.



Mike Newell, an uneven director, has done rather well by this film, which also boasts sensitive camera work by Michael Coulter, and a fine score by Richard Rodney Bennett. And yes, there are funny lines, as when we hear at Gareth's funeral that "the recipe for duck *à la* banana fortunately goes to the grave with him." We read in the papers that Eeling Studios is about to be reactivated: perhaps the recipe for first-class comedy will come back from the grave.

■ Bemoaners of past cinematic glories can have an even better time of it at ***The Paper***, an American newspaper comedy that has delusions of harking back to such classics as *His Girl Friday*. The hero here is Harry Hackett, metro editor of the *New York Sun* (i.e., *Post*), whose wife, Marty, is on maternity leave from her reporter's job and nagging away at Harry to get hired by the *New York Sentinel* (i.e., *Times*), where he is about to have a job interview. Harry's nemesis is Alicia Clark, the managing editor, a ruthless operator and climber, who right now wants to print a damning story about two black youths accused of a racially motivated murder we know they did not commit. Harry has reason to doubt their guilt, but Alicia figures one can always correct the error in the next day's paper, as holding up the presses and going into overtime means spending money the *Sun* cannot afford.

Bernie White, the editor-in-chief, refuses to step between the combatants. For one thing, he has just learned that his prostate is the size of a bagel; for another, his mind is on making peace with his grown daughter, who has become estranged from him. Harry spends most of the day trying to track down the truth about the killing; prodding his most gifted, but spoiled and lazy, columnist, McDougal, into investigating the murder rather than conducting his private vendetta against the parking commissioner; and fighting, sometimes physically, with Alicia. In between, he has to deal with phone calls from Marty, attending to the assorted problems of his zany staff, and find time for that job interview. Repelled by the smugness and stuffiness of the *Sentinel* crowd, he merely steals some information right off the smarmy editor's desk, and leaves.

The screenplay by David and Stephen Koepp revels in the minutely observed details of newsroom frenzy, as well as in the piled-up tribulations of its major characters. But since the director is Ron Howard, you may be sure that, after much huffing and puffing, everything will end in mush. And so it all leads up to the birth of the Hackett baby, and to Bernie's gazing lovingly from the sidewalk through a window at his daughter's happy family life, while justice for the black youths prevails. The physical violence between Harry and Alicia in the press room is preposterous, but there is some small satisfaction in watching Glenn Close (Alicia), that smuggest of actresses, getting thoroughly mauled.

The earlier parts of the movie have at least a credible atmosphere and humor, and Michael Keaton's Harry, Robert Duvall's Bernie, and Randy Quaid's McDougal make all the right moves. Lynne Thigpen and Amelia Campbell are fine in supporting roles, but Marisa Tomei (Marty), Spalding Gray (*Sentinel* editor), and Jason Alexander (Jason Alexander, no matter what the role) are beginning to wear thin. Typical of the prevailing softness are the various media celebrities in cameo roles; I for one got no extra fillip from spotting Bob Costas, William Kunstler, Chuck Scarborough, and their likes popping up to supposedly eye-popping effect.

Which brings me to why *The Paper* was foredoomed. In John Corry's book, *My Times*, we read: "The idea of journalism has changed, transformed by a conflation called media." The day when the newsroom or pressroom of a New York tabloid was where history was made by rough-and-tumble reporters in shirts and suspenders is over. We no longer inhabit the world depicted by Hecht and MacArthur in *The Front Page*, but another, far less amusing one bestowed on us by Oprah, Geraldo, Letterman, and Walters. The media have ousted the press, and the sun has long since set on the *New York Sun*. The *Sentinel*, I suspect, will be next to go. □

TELEVISION

Leave It to Beavis

JAMES GARDNER

FOR over ten years the message of MTV has been, in essence, "Peace, Love, and Naked Surfing." Even before the term Political Correctness entered common parlance, MTV was the epitome of it. Thus it must have come as a surprise to the network's top brass that the most successful program in their history is ***Beavis and Butthead***, which lavishes contempt on everything for which they have seemed to stand.

I like Beavis and Butthead. I liked them from the first time I channel-surfed into their airspace and stilled the habitual restlessness of my thumb long enough to see what they were about. Crudely drawn cartoon adolescents, the blond-haired Beavis and the brown-haired Butthead are neither intelligent nor glamorous nor attractive. To be blunt about it, they are a pair of scrawny, pencil-necked nerds. The raspy-voiced Beavis always sits to the right of the irritatingly nasal Butthead, who is a little more intelligent

Mr. Gardner writes frequently about art for NR. *His book* Culture or Trash? *was published in January by Birch Lane.*

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and has marginally more class. Usually planted before a TV, Butthead faces us frontally while Beavis turns toward him, explicitly acknowledging Butthead's superiority.

Most of their time is spent watching MTV and making inane comments in voice-over about the videos that we see on-screen. "If Debbie Gibson and Tiffany got into a fight," Beavis asks Butthead as one of Tiffany's smarmy videos comes on, "who do you think would win?"

That prompts Beavis to observe: "This is mall music. This music s---s. I hate things that s---. I only like things that are cool." As their comments reveal, they inhabit a Manichaean world ruled not by good and evil but by what's cool and what s---s. If something is more than good, such as a certain heavy-metal band, then it "rules," as in "Metallica rules!"

You wouldn't expect that much vitality could be gotten out of an active vocabulary no larger than that of a cash-machine, minus the grammar. And yet *Beavis and Butthead* contains some of the most authentic and oddly provocative dialogue on the air-waves. Butthead, for example, describes one singer in a video as "a lipstick-wearing, whining w---." Then he wonders aloud: "Hey, Beavis, do you think that if I sang like a w--- I could get some chicks?"

Beavis: "Well, you look like a w---."

Butthead (menacingly): "Shut up, Beavis."

Beavis: "And you talk like a w---."

Butthead: "And I'll kick your a-- like a w--- if you don't shut up."

When not watching MTV, the pair lead a thoroughly middle-class existence in Suburbia, divided between a high school where they learn nothing and jobs at a pizza joint where they do nothing. You never see either of them without the other, and parents or siblings are nowhere to be found. Except for one another, Beavis and Butthead have no one in the world, and they are united against the world. But aside from sticking a firecracker in a frog's mouth, they are not so much evil as irredeemably rotten. To be evil would require a grandeur of soul totally at odds with the pettiness of their nature. This paltriness is in its way incorruptible.

In successive episodes, they encounter feminists, white trash, high-school administrators, lawyers—even the CIA. And yet, no one can reach them or correct them. It is the delight of their creator, Mike Judge, to place them in circumstances calculated to provoke their contempt. In one episode, their infinitely patient, sandal-wearing hippie of a home-room teacher decides that it is time they get in touch with their "feminine side." He assigns them books (by "w----s"?) whose point they completely miss and which they laugh to scorn. In another episode, by purest accident, they are placed in an advanced class, in which a soulful young woman endeavors to teach them the joys of haiku-writing. The results are not much better.

In a typical episode, the principal of their high school sends them, together with other erring students, on one of those "Scared Straight" programs, where inmates are supposed to frighten them into seeing why they should stay out of prison. One inmate shows them his glass eye and peg leg. But instead of getting scared, they are impressed by his coolness. When they are put in a cell with two middle-aged deviant types, Beavis notices that one of them has a tattoo proclaiming "Iron Maiden," a heavy-metal band. "Maiden rules!" Butthead declares. By the time the warden comes to check up on them, he finds all four singing "I'm a Free Man," as they frantically strum their air guitars. He tells the adolescents it's time to go.

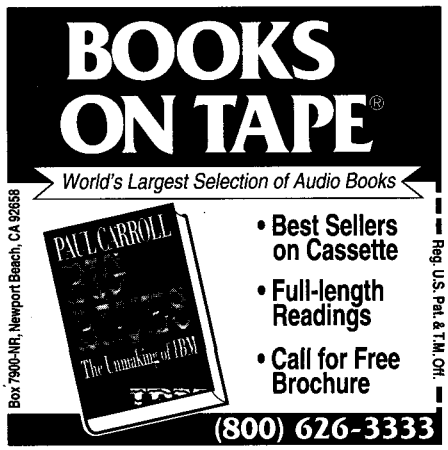
Beavis: "No way!"

Butthead: "That s---s!" As Butthead leaves, making the sign of the devil, he turns to the inmates: "You guys are cool! If we ever get back here, we'll have to party again."

After they're gone, one inmate turns to the others: "You know something? I think we'll see those boys again."

The humor of *Beavis and Butthead* is subtle and intangible. Either you respond or you don't. I am not certain what the demographics are, but in my experience, women tend to be entirely unamused. One thing is certain: you simply cannot like *Beavis and Butthead* and also like most of what MTV represents.

The executives at the network seem to accept that they are being laughed at, and in true show-biz fashion, they swallow their pride long enough to rake in the money, largely ignoring the criticism that the show has occasioned. Because, for example, a deranged youngster set his little sister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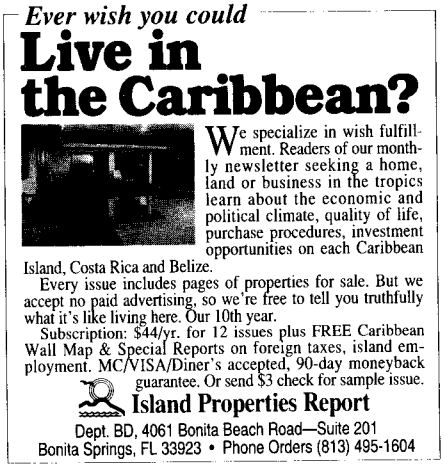
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on fire on account of something he saw on *Beavis and Butthead*, the program has been assailed by certain mirthless people as exemplifying everything that is wrong with an overly violent nation served by unscrupulous networks. Though MTV agreed to show the program only after the kiddies' bedtime, the show gets more air time than ever. Only recently MTV had its first *Beavis and Butthead Marathon*, in which all the past episodes were run one after another.

Beavis and Butthead taps into a far more complicated sensibility than it is in the power of polls and pundits to express. I would guess that very few of those who tune in really endorse the message of violence, stupidity, and selfishness which, at one level, *Beavis and Butthead* seems to enshrine. Rather, they respond intuitively to its irony, to its attack not on liberal ideals so much as on the posturings of many who claim to uphold those ideals and who, in the very act of posturing, often betray them. It is for this irony that I, together with millions of other Americans, like Beavis and Butthead. □

MANNERS IN HONG KONG

Mad Dogs and Chinamen

WILLIAM McGURN

AMONG old China hands, few more contentious issues exist than that of the "No Dogs or Chinese" sign said to have hung outside the Public Gardens atop the Bund of old Shanghai.

Never mind that the heirs of Chairman Mao run shops, restaurants, and hotels full of goodies reserved for foreigners and Party functionaries (membership has its privileges?). Never mind too that the sign never existed—not, at least, the way legend has it. Countless Chinese schoolboys still grow up with it drummed into their heads, and references continue to pop up in the press, Western as well as Eastern, inevitably to illustrate the wickedness of European colonialism. I have cited it to nice effect myself, once even after I was pretty sure it had never been there.

The last laugh, however, almost always belongs to history. Nowhere is this more true than in China. European colonialism may not have been the most congenial of systems, but a half-century of experience with its Asiatic competitors (not least of which has been Chinese Communism) makes Kipling look downright tender. And events finally came full circle in Hong Kong recently when it turned out that a luxury apartment building had posted signs banning both maids and dogs from the main elevator. The prohibition on maids appeared in Chinese and Tagalog (the most common of the Philippines' many languages) and was posted under another sign forbidding dogs. Apparently the signs had been there for some time but had not been enforced until a recent change in management.

Mr. McGurn is senior editor of the Far Eastern Economic Review.

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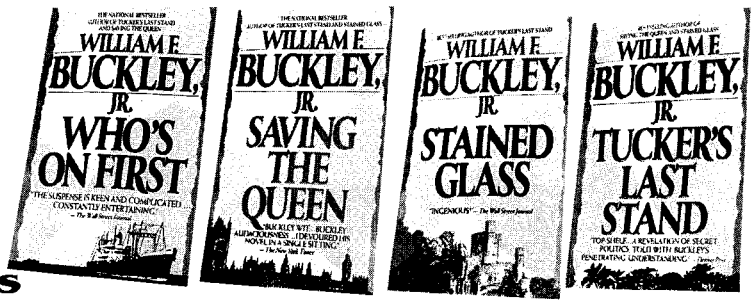

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What lends the notice a racial cast in Hong Kong is the more or less exclusive identification of "maid" with "Filipina." Years ago, many families here had a Chinese maid, or *amah*, whose primary charge was the children. Today affluence has made the Chinese *amahs* largely a thing of the past, replaced by Filipinas forced by a succession of idiotic governments at home into seeking work as domestics abroad. Many of these Filipinas have college degrees. Even more have other family members here as well—mothers, sisters, daughters—working in other homes raising Chinese and European children so that their own might eat. And where five years ago there were just 25,000 Filipina maids here, today there are 105,000.

Now, one of the most striking things for Americans living abroad is how little attention the rest of the world pays to our racial conventions. The Cantonese expression for foreigner, *gwei loh*, translates roughly as "foreign devil," and though the expatriate community here takes it as a joke, the word is in its origins as rude as "nigger" is in English—and it can still have the same connotation. Of course, the Chinese are no more or less prejudiced than other Asians. On the whole, they do not much harbor illusions about a yellow man's burden.

In particular they dislike the thousands of Filipina *amahs* descending upon the city square on their one day off each week. A couple of months back, Hong Kong Land, which owns much of the commercial space around the area and is in turn owned by the powerful conglomerate Jardine Matheson (the real-life Noble House), became an instant press villain when it launched a push to sweep the Filipinas from the square. Although the charges of "ethnic cleansing" were absurd, so was the proposed alternative gathering place: a parking garage. More embarrassment followed when the *amah* for Jardine taipan Nigel Rich was quoted as saying that her boss's attempt to move the Filipinas to an underground garage "was not a nice idea."

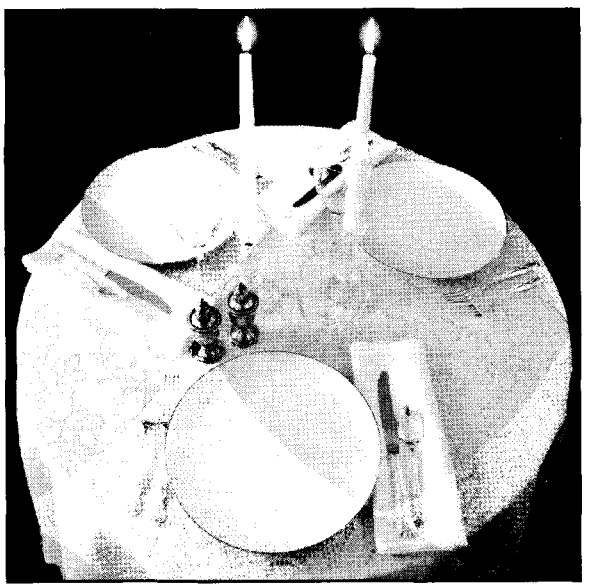
This was the background to the brouhaha set off when a Filipina maid named Linda faxed off a note to the *South China Morning Post* about "No Dogs or Filipinas" signs posted in Tregunter Towers, where apartments rent for $7,500 per month. Although the signs were hastily removed, the spirit behind them lingers on. Just a few days after the story broke, the following note was slipped under the doors of Filipinas living in the building:

> YOU SHOULD TAKE THE SERVICE LIFT WHERE YOU BELONG! IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, PLEASE GO BACK TO YOUR COUNTRY.
>
> DON'T FORGET THAT YOU ARE EMPLOYED HERE AS SERVANTS!
>
> DON'T RUIN THE REPUTATION OF YOUR OWN KIND WHO DISAGREE WITH YOUR ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS.
>
> OBVIOUSLY THIS APPLIES TO THE USE OF THE SHUTTLE BUSES ALSO.

Not much subtlety here. It was signed "a group of very angry tenants."

Reaction was swift and ludicrous. The Philippine consul general lodged a protest and drew parallels with the Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazi movement. The United Migrant Workers, United Filipinos in Hong Kong, and the Mission for Filipino Migrant Workers all issued denunciations. The incident was particularly embarrassing for some British Hong Kong civil servants (including Governor Chris Patten's press secretary) who live in Tregunter Towers and have now hurriedly denounced a sign they had given no thought to before.

But mostly the war has been carried out on the letters page of the *Post*,



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where hostilities have raged between those urging sympathy for the long-suffering Filipinas and those saying the Filipinas need to learn their place. "Yes, we are domestic helpers, but that doesn't make us less human," wrote Marrz Saludez Balaoro.

"Experienced colonials, unlike the *nouveau* expatriates, knew how to employ staff and treat them well, without going overboard," allowed Mina Kaye.

"Although some of them allege that they are college graduates in the Philippines and therefore seem to have a corresponding sense of superiority, they come here to work as domestic helpers, and they should not expect to be treated more favorably than others in their position," said J. Ong.

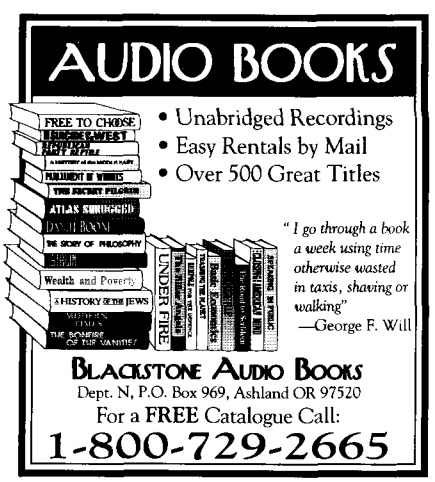
But the most priceless letter came from a man who signed his name Robert Thio and was fool enough to append the letters "PhD" after it. The signs, he declared, "were not put up without a valid reason." He then gave that reason. "I have observed," said Dr. Thio, "that many Filipino maids speak loudly among themselves in the lifts of the building and on public business (particularly in mini-buses). This is a nuisance and generates resentment among other people."

Well, the dam burst after this one. Anyone who has heard Cantonese speaking among themselves will concede that they are not exactly Trappist monks, a fact pointed out by the next round of correspondents.

Up at Tregunter Towers soon after, I ran into two Filipina *amahs* who work in the complex but say they have decent employers. They tell me that the publicity has angered some Chinese in the building. "I don't know why they treat us like we're not human," says one. "We are the ones who are raising their children."

And the infamous sign from atop the Bund? Again, the news is not comforting for those who associate all villainy with the West. In 1973 Richard Hughes returned to Shanghai after many years of absence and devoted his subsequent column in the *Far Eastern Economic Review* to puncturing the legend. The sign, he said, was not a sign at all but "a paragraph in a great list of municipal proscriptions—in Chinese, never in English—which was exhibited outside the park from 1868 until 1925. Following the May 30 demonstrations in that year, the British quietly removed it." That may explain the origins. But no one has yet explained how so many people came to believe otherwise.

Until now, that is. Lynn Pan, author of several books on Shanghai, says the source of the myth was revealed to her during a visit to the basement of the Shanghai Museum. In the course of her research for a just-released photo essay on old Shanghai, she stumbled across not one but an entire cache of "No Dogs or Chinese" signs that had been manufactured by Party authorities to parade before visiting foreign delegations as evidence that Noël Coward really had it right when he linked mad dogs with Englishmen. "People swear until they are blue in the face that they saw it on the Gardens," says Miss Pan, who fled the city with her family in the 1950s. "But it was never there." Perhaps it was the noonday sun. □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DELECTATIONS

Have You Heard?

TAKI

ABOUT eight years ago, Auberon Waugh (son of Evelyn) and I debated two high-priced lawyers at the Oxford Union. The motion, which we were defending, was, Resolved: Gossip has a place in journalism. We wiped the floor with them. The two mouthpieces got up first and read out a long list of people whose lives had been ruined by the yellow press of Fleet Street and its vicious gossip-mongers. Then we got up and went to work on them. I excused myself for arriving late by telling the audience that two stretch limos, presumably owned by the lawyers, had blocked access to the ancient town. (This was to remind the students how well paid lawyers are, although I did confess later that both had arrived by train.) Our main point was that without gossip, history as we know it would not exist.

Take, for example, the Duc de Saint-Simon. Sainte-Beuve called the duke the spy of the century, and, thank God, he was. Were it not for Saint-Simon's chronicles of life at Versailles, we would probably adhere to a Hollywood version of what went on in the ritualized society of the Sun King.

The duke, was, in effect, the Richard Johnson and Liz Smith of his day. Nigel Dempster, England's greatest gossip writer, believes that four hundred years from now, people will read the gossip columns to find out what twentieth-century life was really like. Mr. Dempster goes further. "I look at people's sex lives, especially those of prominent people, because the personal habits that manifest themselves only when observed close up are the ones that lead to detection of flaws that might influence public performance." Amen, say I. Look what could have been prevented if we had known about Bill Clinton's love life before November 1992.

Prince Charles is another example. Before he was given away by the divine Diana, the British press took Charles at face value. Everything one read about him was like the stuff Madison Avenue puts out for its best clients. And the revelations of his philandering and cold-heartedness, although initially detrimental to the Crown, have made Charles a better heir. He now lies low and behaves like a celibate priest. It was the gossip mongers who were responsible for the new, improved Charles.

Personally, I love a good gossip. Even when I read history I find that it's the gossip that gives the flavor—

Taki Theodoracopulos, an NR *contributor, is the author of* Nothing to Declare *(Atlantic Monthly Press).*

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and often, the substance—of who people were and what life was like. Public accomplishments are simply not enough. If they were, we'd have passport-like descriptions of the various characters in history, and *c'est tout*.

In Talleyrand's case, for instance, one begins to understand the amorality of his political ambitions—and his immorality in general—by reading the gossip of his having seduced Duchesses of Dino from three generations: *grandmère*, *mère*, and *fille*.

Homer's songs about the Trojan Wars and Ulysses' wanderings are the sort of gossip that informs and helps define the age. They could not have survived without the impulse to pass on a good story. Of course, in those days people gossiped about the bravery of their heroes—not about, say, what Barbra Streisand thinks of a certain draft-dodger in the White House.

Much of what we know of medieval history is sheer gossip, and later on it was the gossips like Voltaire, Samuel Pepys, William Hickey, and Madame de la Tour du Pin who gave us glimpses into people's private lives, thus making history intellectually honest as well as not boring.

Now, alas, we have to put up with movie stars' self-serving tales. Glossy magazines publish hagiographies of illiterate film stars in return for having access to them. In fact gossip is getting a bad name from the type of people who indulge in it today. Saint-Simon, where are you now that we really need you? □

BOOKS IN BRIEF

What They Fought For, 1861–1865, by James M. McPherson (Louisiana State, 88 pp., $16.95)

IN THE image popularized by Ernest Hemingway and other modern writers, combat infantrymen are inevitably cynical about notions such as glory, honor, courage, sacrifice, valor, and sacred causes. Apparently confirming this view, at least in part, a major study conducted during World War II found that most soldiers had little or no understanding of the cause they fought for, being motivated principally by devotion to comrades in their own platoon. This modern hermeneutic has sometimes been read back into earlier conflicts, including the Civil War. Contra Hemingway et al., Professor James M. McPherson (*Battle Cry of Freedom*) argues that a surprisingly large percentage of Civil War soldiers on each side of the Mason–Dixon line felt high levels of patriotism and ideological commitment to their respective causes throughout the war. "Our cynicism about the genuineness of such sentiments is more our problem than theirs," says Mr. McPherson, who arrived at this conclusion somewhat reluctantly, after analyzing thousands of letters and diaries written by frontline soldiers. Excerpts from these sources are employed, to bracing effect, in the text. This little book will undoubtedly stir controversy not only among historians but also in the larger intellectual culture, where thinking about war has been shaped to a great extent by *A Farewell to Arms* and *M*A*S*H*.

—MATTHEW BERKE

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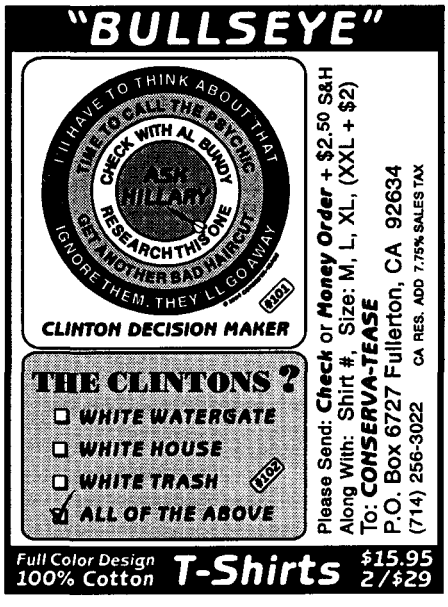

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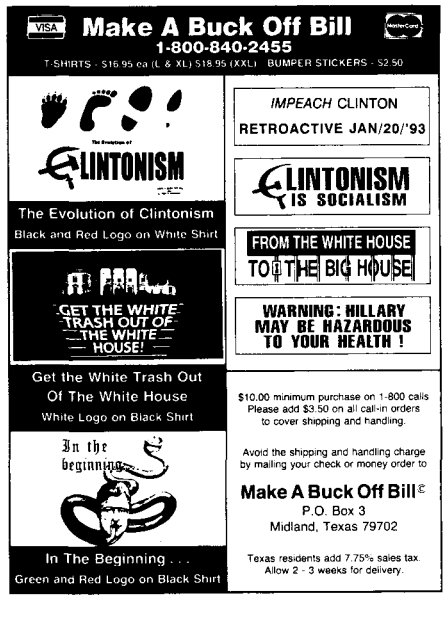
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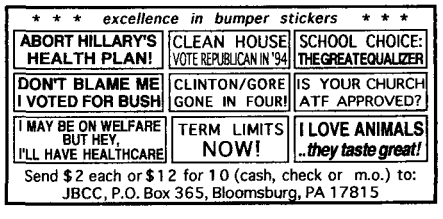
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COYNE

(Continued from page 25)

"What we are looking for," says Kelly, "are genuine leaders—people who believe in what they say, and will do it." The scores of young people who climb onto the Kelly doubledecker campaign bus for the parade obviously believe that in the 27-year-old Kelly they've found such a leader.

Can he pull it off?

Given the 1st District's racial breakdown—70 per cent black, 26 per cent white, 4 per cent other—the odds are long. But with the defeat of Roland Burris by Dawn Clark Netsch in the Democratic gubernatorial primary, there is no black with star quality at the top of the ticket, and therefore no heavy black turnout is expected. Moreover, Kelly believes his message to the middle class is a message to voters of all races.

The voters may or may not see it that way. But on the South Side of Chicago, around St. Patrick's Day, anything seems possible. In the Coaches' Corner, a bar with an un-Gaelic name but an ultra-Gaelic crowd, a jukebox traces a quick musical trip through the Irish soul—from "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" through "Wild Colonial Boy" to "Whisky in the Jar" to, finally, "Mother Machree." And as you listen to that music and look at those faces and feel the incredible vitality, you wonder—even though you may be cursed by being one of them—how can these people *ever* lose?

Later in the day, St. Patrick's Maker, exacting His penance for mid-Lenten revelry, sent a cold driving rain into the 150,000-plus crowd, thinning it considerably before the politicians made their appearance. (In the South Side parade, unlike its downtown counterpart, the politicians always bring up the rear.) There were no applause meters handy. But the consensus was that William Kelly was far and away the hit of the political end of the show.

Kelly may or may not win his election in November. But he's one of the first spokesmen for a new generation of middle-class Americans.

Throughout the country, the old counterculture has become the establishment. In Chicago, William Kelly is speaking for an incipient new counterculture. We'll hear more from him and his supporters. □

SCHULMAN

(Continued from page 51)

per year and over a million gun defenses if one included all firearms.

Kleck's latest research, his Spring 1993 National Self-Defense Survey of 4,979 households, reveals that previous studies underestimated the number of times respondents used their firearms in defense. The new survey suggests 2.4 million gun defenses in 1992, 1.9 million of them with handguns; and about 72 per cent of these gun defenses occurred in or near the home. This indicates a successful gun defense about 1,728,000 times a year with no body for Dr. Kellermann to find.

So who is doing the killing? *Murder Analysis*, 1992, tells us that 72.39 per cent of the murderers the Chicago Police studied in 1992 had a criminal history and, interestingly, 65.53 per cent of the victims did as well. A recent National Institute of Justice analysis finds, "It is clear that only a very small fraction of privately owned firearms are ever involved in crime or [unlawful] violence, the vast bulk of them being owned and used more or less exclusively for sport and recreational purposes, or for self-protection."

Criminologist Don Kates concurs: "It has been estimated that 98.32 per cent of owners do not use a gun in an unlawful homicide (over a 50-year, adult life span)."

Overwhelmingly, violence isn't a matter of ordinary people killing because a firearm is handy, but of criminals committing violence because violence is their way of life. When the Centers for Disease Control starts defining bullets as "pathogens" and hands honest gun owners the Typhoid Marys of a "gun-violence epidemic," the medical profession has lent its scientific credibility to a radical political agenda which threatens to increase the overall violence in our society by shifting the balance of power toward the well-armed psychopath.

Oddly enough, even Dr. Kellermann agrees. In the March/April 1994 issue of *Health*, he is quoted as saying: "If you've got to resist, your chances of being hurt are less the more lethal your weapon. If that were my wife, would I want her to have a .38 special in her hand? Yeah."

In this particular gunfight, the best ammunition is the truth. □

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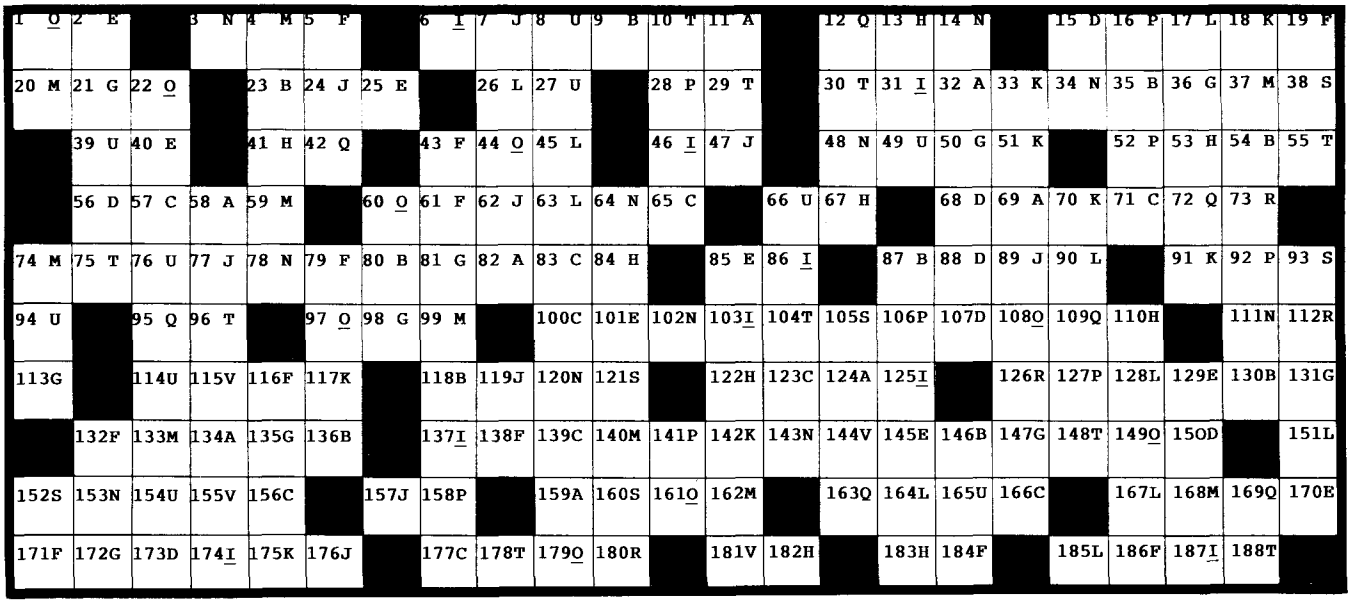
TRANS-O-GRAM / Kem Putney



DEFINITIONS

A. Condo's predecessor — 124 82 58 159 32 69 11 134

B. One of the 3 Rs — 23 136 146 80 9 87 54 118 130 35

C. Youthful Ohio city? — 166 123 71 83 100 156 65 57 177 139

D. Muted — 173 88 68 15 150 107 56

E. Paint option — 101 40 2 85 129 170 145 25

F. Bismarck's state (2 words) — 61 138 5 132 186 19 43 116 184 171 79

G. Lessening — 113 172 21 81 131 98 36 135 147 50

H. Wild West one-on-ones — 110 53 182 41 183 67 122 13 84

I. Important estate employee — 137 174 31 103 46 187 125 86 6

J. Else — 47 62 119 176 24 157 7 89 77

K. Giggled — 175 142 70 33 117 91 18 51

L. Snitch—to children — 90 63 185 26 167 45 128 164 151 17

M. Vastly overrated "effect" — 74 99 168 37 59 133 20 4 140 162

N. Outgunned, on the tennis court — 3 102 120 78 153 111 143 64 48 34 14

O. Seer — 161 60 22 1 97 108 149 44 179

P. Make grievous — 158 106 28 127 141 52 92 16

Q. Music genre — 72 12 169 109 95 163 42

R. Talking heads' subject — 112 73 126 180

S. Fourth son of Abraham — 121 152 38 93 160 105

T. Defendants' common plea — 75 96 10 104 178 30 55 29 148 188

U. One type of convention speech — 165 27 114 154 94 49 66 39 76 8

V. Tight — 181 115 144 155

DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's Deluxe Unabridged Dictionary*, Second Edition.

Solution to Last Issue's Trans-O-Gram. RON HUTCHESON: *That Fever:* "Of all the symptoms of Potomac Fever, one of the most common is the belief among members of Congress that they have what it takes to become President. The malady is particularly prevalent in the Senate."

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North v. Miller, Robb, Warner, Reagan

LEXINGTON, VA., APRIL 1

At Washington and Lee University political attention focuses these days on the upcoming senatorial primary. The political factionalism of today reflects the savage factionalism of the Civil War, rather than the more recent period during which no question was so complicated that it could not be answered by the simple expedient of asking Senator Harry Byrd what to do. When the war ended, General Lee became president of Washington College (as it was then called). Five years later, General Lee complained of chest pains, was taken to the presidential house a hundred yards away, and two weeks later was dead: at 63, like FDR. Harry Byrd, on the other hand, lived until 79; and after he went (1966), Virginia was up for grabs.

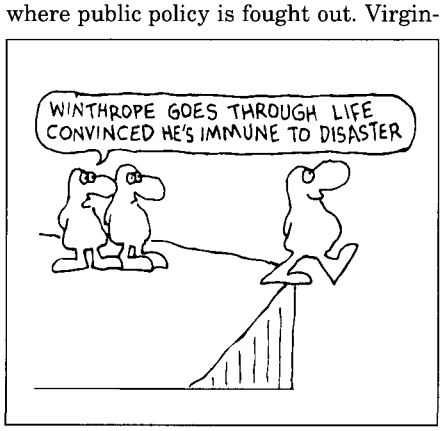
The heavy shooting now is aimed at candidate Oliver North. Colonel North is remembered far and wide for his brazen defense of everything he did during Iran–Contra, including that which was not legal. His posture, during the televised hearings, was, If that's what my superiors tell me to do, that is what I shall do. A chestfull of decorations instantly communicated that, in earlier years, Ollie North's superiors commended such an attitude, as also the gallantry with which Mr. North carried out his orders in the field.

His difficulties in the primary have to do with his exposure as someone who lied under oath and who shredded evidence desired by the prosecution. He escaped going to jail because the review court acknowledged that he did not get a fair trial owing to his pre-exposure to jurors in the congressional hearings.

But the anti-North forces haven't been merely Democrats happy to turn their attention away from Whitewater. The most bitter enemy of Oliver North is the Republican senator who would be his senior colleague in the event North won. Senator John Warner went about as far as a fellow Republican can go in denouncing a candidate. Not only, he said, would a race between incumbent Senator Chuck Robb and Candidate Oliver North result in a victory for a third candidate running on an independent ticket, but he, Senator Warner, would vote for that third candidate.

Colonel North received a setback last week when Ronald Reagan communicated to the voters of Virginia via a letter to his old friend Paul Laxalt. What Mr. Reagan said was that he had never authorized any of the activity in which Colonel North had engaged. This had the effect of undermining the principal line of defense of Mr. North. However, he picked himself up off the floor by saying that he absolutely respected Mr. Reagan's word in the matter, but that since North operated in the third echelon in the chain of command, he had no reason to doubt that the orders given him were being given by faithful subordinates of the President. A pretty satisfying answer, it would seem, though it leaves in question the problem of seeking admission to a body before which he felt no compunction about lying.

And then Colonel North has the problem that there is another contender for the senatorial spot, a thoroughbred conservative with impressive credentials. James Miller served as chief of the Office of Management and Budget for President Reagan. He is a PhD in economics who has written books and learned articles. He didn't fight in the trenches of Vietnam, as Ollie North did. But he has fought valiantly in those other trenches where public policy is fought out. Virginian voters seeking conservative representation do in fact have an alternative to Mr. North.



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The full-time political addicts in this part of the world will tell you two things about prospective contests. The polls appear to indicate that Miller would have the better chance over Robb because Miller's selection would unfreight the GOP of the heavy burden of Ollie North.

That is one view of it. But the other is that Miller can't begin to match North's skills as an on-line polemicist; that a contest between Robb and North would cause Mr. Robb to bleed to death from the hammerblows of a combat politician never trained to take prisoners. There are those who yearn for such a confrontation, less because they dislike Mr. Robb (he is eminently likable) than because they think him a Doppelgänger for Bill Clinton: messy home-life, womanizer, left-oriented: vulnerable.

Miller v. Robb? A team v. B team. □

How to Lecture China

NEW YORK, MARCH 22

It isn't recorded exactly what the prime minister of Japan said to the prime minister of China at the banquet after which Morihiro Hosokawa flew back to Tokyo, but the one sentence reported is tantalizing. "He disclosed," reports the *New York Times*, "that he told Li Peng, his Chinese counterpart, that the Western concept of human rights should not be blindly applied to all nations."

One begins by examining the reporter's own use of language. Li Peng was designated as prime minister of China by a coterie of Communist Party members dominated by an octogenarian tyrant. Hosokawa was voted leader of his political party, whose members submit at regular intervals to the voters for approval. The formal rules apply. Under international protocol, Colonel Amin was "chief of state." So is Mobutu. So was Gorbachev. But it wasn't until Yeltsin that Russia had a chief of state whose legitimacy is acknowledged according to liberal Western culture.

What did Prime Minister Hosokawa probably say to his Chinese "counterpart"? The context suggests he was saying the United States was going too far, dispatching Secretary of State Warren Christopher to China to demand an implementation of something like the American Bill of Rights. Our Bill of Rights is in some respects an enumera-

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tion distinctive to our own history and culture, though surely there are rights listed which are universal in their application. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights reads like a list made up at the end of a drunken evening in which people scratch their heads wondering if anybody neglected an endearing "right." It lists as a universal right, for instance, the occupation of one's choice, which would suggest that if everybody in China desired to be a photographer, China would be in violation of the United Nations Declaration unless everybody earned a living as a photographer.

But Warren Christopher was not sent to China to tell Li Peng kindly to suspend all other political activity for long enough to incorporate the American Bill of Rights into the Chinese constitution. Mr. Christopher's mission was to ask for evidence that the Chinese state was moving in the direction of observing more human rights than before. In response, the Chinese government promised to consider dropping counterrevolution as a crime.

Now that is a gesture toward loosening dictatorial ties. But it does suggest the difficulty to which Prime Minister Hosokawa was almost certainly pointing. If democracy is rejected as inappropriate in the historical circumstances, it is not properly concluded that the society is indifferent to human rights. Francisco Franco, winning a civil war in Spain, stayed on for nearly forty years as the nation's caudillo. Yet what happened in Spain, between 1939 and 1975, was an increase, almost day by day, in human freedom. The one exception was that no one was "free" to overthrow the dictatorship of Franco. To say that Spaniards were not "free" until Franco died and his government was replaced by democratically elected representatives is to ignore the differences between life in Spain under Franco, and life in much of the rest of the world under such as Khrushchev, Mao, Mobutu, and Qaddafi. It would not be easy to enumerate those African republics in which human rights are better preserved today under native leaders, than they were under the imperialist predecessors.

The notion that the Chinese dictators can successfully force the working population to produce at prices designed to undersell the competition elsewhere is glib and unrealistic. If Chinese workers are required to produce textiles for wages of one dollar per day the time very quickly comes when productive energies turn to other pursuits. And socialist impositions cease to work as efforts are made to override economic reality by bureaucratic ukase.

If we are waiting for China to become a happy pastureland for students of John Stuart Mill, we are wasting our time. The best we can hope for is something on the order of what Franco gave Spain. □

Junior Frogspeak

NEW YORK, MARCH 29

David Brooks of the *Wall Street Journal*, as reported in this space last issue, made a point wonderfully relevant to today's situation in France. It is that the reputation for stratospheric academic work by the French elite is justified, but that none of this work is given over to mastering elementary economics. The French intellectual is typically a *philosophe*. And the philosophical side of young France believes that one thousand dollars per month is the minimum pay that should be given to a young Frenchman in exchange for his labor.

During the week just gone by, the demonstrations by the "students" (not everyone under 25 in France is a student) got so heated, there was talk of a repeat of 1968. That was the great convulsive year—the year of the Democratic Convention in Chicago, of students killed in Mexico City, of riots in New Delhi and Rome. And, in France, the year the great Charles de Gaulle had literally to get out of town, make his peace with a few critical alumni of the Algerian war, come back to Paris and stake the Fifth Republic's life on one dramatic television speech, followed by a huge demonstration. It is hard to remember exactly what the students of yesteryear were railing against. But today what they are railing against is economic gravity.

Twelve per cent of the French are unemployed. Twenty-five per cent of those under 25 are unemployed. Seeking to do something about the young people, the government had proposed reducing the minimum wage by about one-third. The reaction by the students was so electric, the Balladur government backed off a little bit, specifying that those who had done advanced college work should receive at least 80 per cent of the minimum wage. But now M. Balladur has abandoned even this decree.

An instructive story by Dana Milbank of the *Wall Street Journal* was filed on Monday. Unemployment in Great Britain has been a depressing constant for several years. Miraculously, it is slightly reducing, down to 9.8 per cent. Without anybody particularly noticing, the productivity of Great Britain has risen by an annual average of 4.5 per cent since 1979; the fastest rate of any major industrialized nation.

To give a very dramatic example of what this means, consider the plight of David Cousins. He is a home-loan officer, working on a three-month tryout for $6.74 per hour. "The pay is 'a nightmare,'" the news story quotes the "bearded 44-year-old, who earned $22.46 an hour before being laid off a couple of years ago by another bank." Mr. Cousins further says "In days gone by, they never would have got away with this." He means that the all-powerful labor unions would have protected him. That's true—until whole industries died.

If one-quarter of the youth in France are not working it is (in most cases) because some people prefer not to work, than to work at wages employers can afford to pay them. It is no easier in France than in the United States to tote up the cash value of all the benefits that flow to the unemployed, coming as they do in so many forms—from health care to food stamps to direct relief. Now whatever the young French are getting, the demonstrators are telling the community: Better what they have—welfare—than work at 80 per cent of the minimum wage. Professor Martin Feldstein of Harvard 15 years ago noted that a married man in Boston earning $20,000 per year stood to lose only 15 per cent of his income if he stopped working. To surrender 15 per cent of one's income in return for forty hours of free time is not a bad exchange. Even so, such as David Cousins in England are gradually discovering that work at a lower wage is better than no work at all. And rising productivity holds out the promise, historically, of shared benefits.

What the strident young French demonstrators are saying to their elders is: Pay us what the legislators postulate as a minimum wage, or else do without our services and pay us a subsidy. The class in question is demanding unemployment for a living.

"What do you do for a living, Jacques?"

"I don't work for a living. Exhausting, *n'est-ce pas*?"

M. Balladur has earned a reputation as a tergiversator. His specialty has been to give in—to fishermen, farmers, candlestick makers. Somebody should organize a trip for young Frenchmen to visit Great Britain and maybe read a little of the work of the great British economists. But then, they could stay home and read Jean-Baptiste Say. □

(Universal Press Syndicate)

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PBS: The Yanni State

A FEW years ago, while researching one of my semi-annual screeds against public television, I asked a PBS marketing specialist to describe a typical PBS audience. Her answer was succinct: "affluent, highly educated, the movers and shakers, the socially conscious and well-informed."

This was the kind of quote every reporter lives for—guaranteed to embarrass the person who spoke it, as well as her employers, while offering maximum aid and comfort to their enemies. With thoughtless candor she had put the lie to one of public broadcasting's cornerstone conceits, which is that PBS is an egalitarian haven for the marginalized of American society, fiercely dedicated to meeting the "viewing needs" of those neglected in the Hobbesian marketplace of commercial broadcasting.

The story in which her quote appeared is now forgotten, but the quote lives on. It has been recycled in countless other pieces of anti-PBS agitprop. I lower my eyes modestly when I confess that Bob Dole even read it into the *Congressional Record*.

Still, I can't help thinking that over the years her quote has been misread. Of course it reflected something that is unassailably true. Public television *is* a government-funded plaything for the nation's well-to-do. But what her quote tells us about PBS is less interesting than what PBS tells us about the "affluent, highly educated movers and shakers" who watch it. Public television is a window into the soul of America's elite, an anthropological artifact as illuminating as the op-ed page of the *New York Times* or the underwear ads (are there any other kind?) in *Vanity Fair*.

The time to peek into the window is the month of March, during pledge week. It is then that affiliates broadcast the shows best fitted for their audience, who are expected to shower the stations with money in return. Each year's pledge drive seems to yield a new cash cow. One year it was a series by the "co-dependency theorist" John Bradshaw. Another brought us the New Age guru Leo Buscaglia. Very often the big draw is a chin-pull between Bill Moyers and one of his discoveries, like Maya Angelou or the "mythologist" Joseph Campbell, who famously moved and shook our movers and shakers with the injunction to "Follow Your Bliss." (America elected Bill Clinton three years later.) Taken together these shows suggest an unflattering picture of American intellectual life. Even so, the most jaundiced observers must have been dismayed this year when the annual pledge-drive poster boy proved to be a New Age musician named Yanni.

First, let's straighten out the matter of Yanni's name. He has only the one, apparently; he is among those celebrities—Cher, Sting, Meatloaf—who give fits to the *New York Times* copy desk, where courtesy titles like Mr. are still obligatory. (The *Times* once referred to Mr. Loaf.) But the single name, along with a tailored wardrobe, a gorgeous head of hair, and great teeth, have been enough to lift him to international stardom. His popularity has lagged somewhat in the U.S., until now. For this year's pledge drive he filmed a concert documentary with the Royal Philharmonic, and it proved a roaring success. My own local PBS affiliate aired the program like a tape loop, for good reason; one Saturday night showing raked in an amazing $51,000 in pledges. Some PBS stations even canceled a previously scheduled Andy Williams special to repeat Yanni's performance.

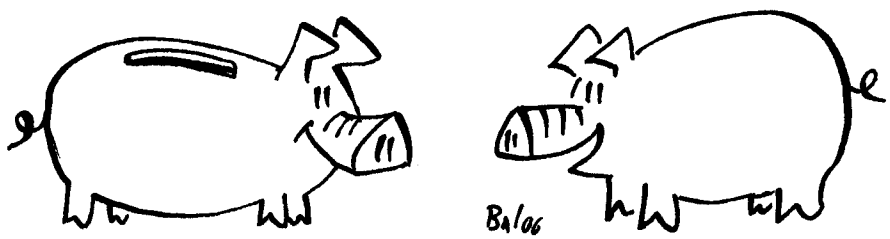
Yanni knows his audience. The concert took place at the Acropolis—a cleverly classical, PBS-like touch, for as any PBS videophile can tell you, the Acropolis is where a lot of famous Greeks such as I, Claudius hung out hundreds of years ago. And Yanni is Greek too! So it's like a full circle. Bathed in supernal light, the Parthenon looming above, Yanni appeared dressed in white, amid a bank of electronic keyboards. The musicians of the Philharmonic sat in black tie behind him. As the music billowed out Yanni winced, sometimes hiked his eyebrows, always made sure to toss the heaps of hair from his brow. Andy Williams is going bald.

WITH apologies to those who haven't heard it, I won't dwell on Yanni's music. There isn't much to describe. The strings provided long, pillowy sixth and ninth chords, over which Yanni played little tinkling descants on his synthesizer. Occasionally the rhythm altered, breaking the tedium and allowing Yanni to turn away from the audience and shift his weight from hip to hip. These moments alone were doubtless worth hundreds of thousands in pledges. And, so different from those troublesome pieces of classical music, when Yanni stops playing you know you're supposed to applaud.

And applaud they did, a crescendo rising from the mitts of the college presidents, lapsed priests, animal-rights activists, grad students, and guilty MBAs who compose the affluent, socially conscious audience PBS prizes so highly. In music Yanni offers them what Joseph Campbell and the others offered them in philosophy. It is a curious crew, this American elite, unlike any other elite in history, probably: moved by words without sense, humming music with no tune.

—ANDREW FERGUSON

Mr. Ferguson is a senior writer for The Washingtonian.



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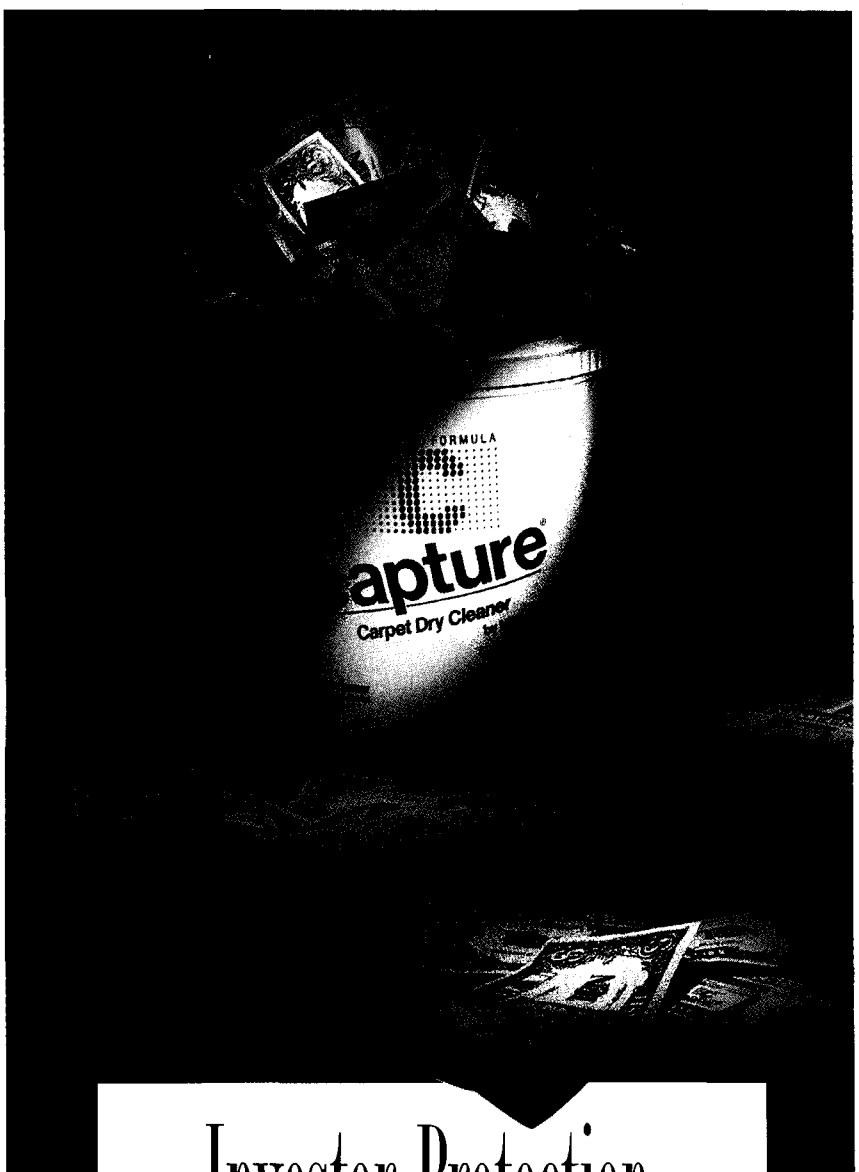

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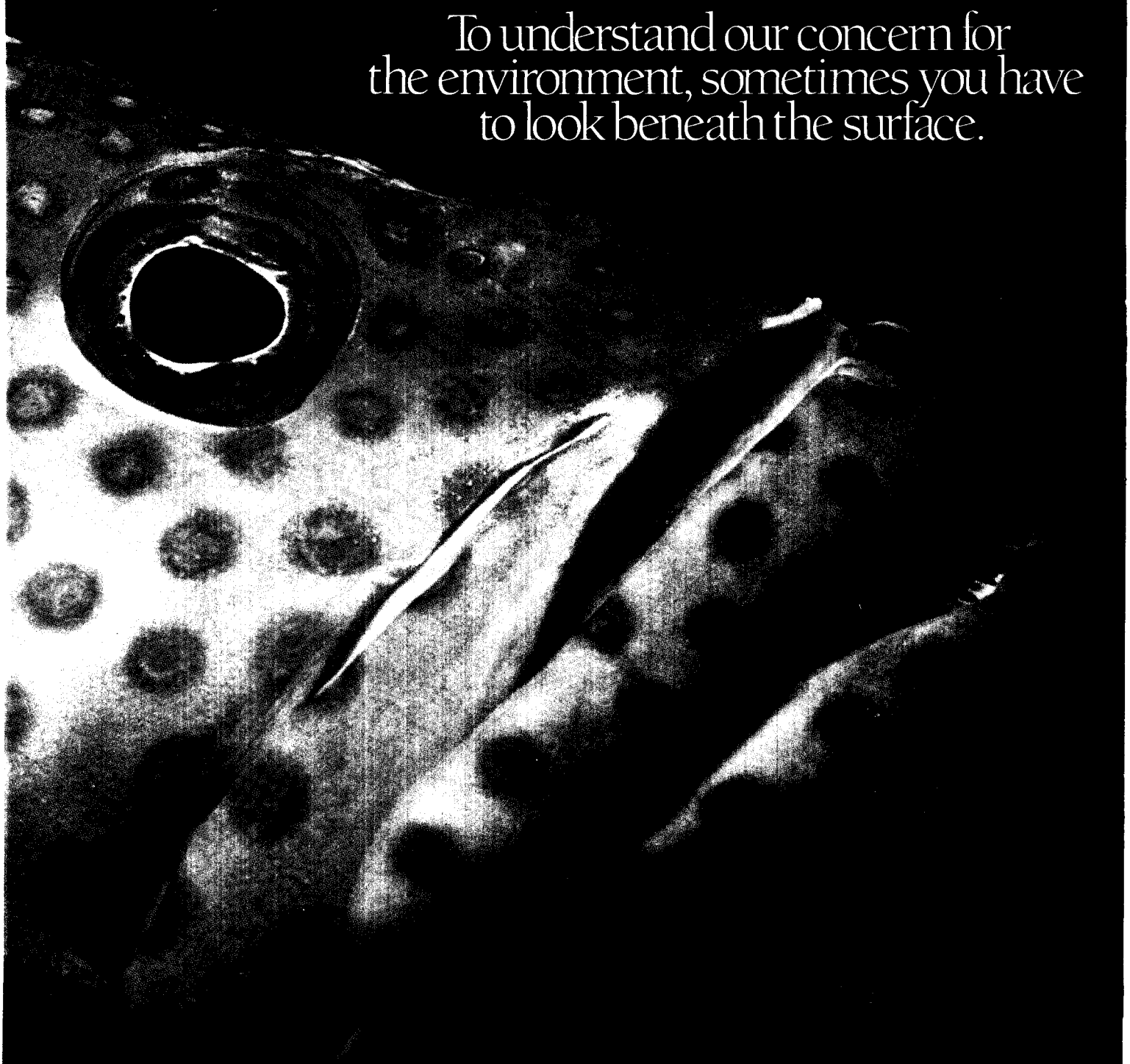

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